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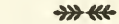

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Works

NICHOL'S SERIES OF STANDARD DIVINES.

PURITAN PERIOD.

With General Preface

BY JOHN C. MILLER, D.D.,

LINCOLN COLLEGE; HONORARY CANON OF WORCESTER; RECTOR OF GREENWICH.

THE

WORKS OF GEORGE SWINNOCK, M.A.

VOL. I.

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THE WORKS

OF

GEORGE SWINNOCK, M.A.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING:

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING, PART I.,

AND A PORTION OF PART II.

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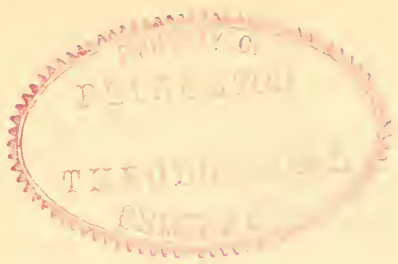

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THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the Worshipful, and his honoured Patron, Richard Hampden, of Hampden, in Buckinghamshire, Esq.; and to the Honourable Lady, Lætitia Hampden, his virtuous consort.

Though philosophers difference man especially from brutes, by his chief natural quality, Reason,[1] yet some divines like rather to do it by his supernatural excellency, Religion: probably upon this twofold ground, partly because religion is the highest and truest reason, and therefore causeth the greatest essential distinction. What can be more rational than the supreme truth to be believed, the chiefest good to be embraced, the first cause to be acknowledged, and those who were made by God, and live wholly upon him, to improve all for him, and to live wholly to him? The giving up our souls and bodies unto God is called our 'reasonable sacrifice,' Rom. xii. 2; those that are irreligious are termed 'unreasonable,' 2 Thes. iii. 2. Indeed, atheists are but beasts, shaped in the proportion and dressed in the habits of men. It is impossible for man to manifest more want of reason, than in wandering from God, the fountain of his being, and the wellspring of all his blessedness. Who ever, unless bereft of his wits and distracted, would murder his body, much less his precious soul, for ever? As soon as ever the prodigal 'came to himself,' he came to his father. It was a clear sign he had lost his reason, when he left bread in his father's house for husks amongst swine. Men's hearts naturally are, like Nebuchadnezzar's, the hearts of beasts, grazing only in fleshly pastures, and savouring only sensual pleasures, till their reason returneth to them; then they bless and honour the most high God, who liveth for ever, Dan. iv. 34; then they mind spir-

[1] Lact. de Ira Dei.

itual dainties, and relish celestial delights. The irreligious are fellow-commoners with beasts; the religious, with angels.

Partly because religion is the end and excellency of the rational creature, of which brutes are wholly incapable. Brutes were made to serve God, men only to worship him. The Jewish Talmud propoundeth the question, Why God made man just on the evening before the Sabbath? and giveth this answer, That he might immediately enter upon the sanctification of the Sabbath, in the worship of the blessed God, the end for which he was made. Purity of religion was our primitive, and therefore must needs be our principal perfection. All who have any knowledge of the great God, will easily grant that man was a curious piece, rare workmanship indeed, when he came immediately out of his Maker's hands; it is impossible but that the child must be amiable and beautiful in a high degree, which was begotten by, and is the picture of, such a Father.

A religious life (which consisteth in exalting God in our affections, as our chiefest good, and in our actions, as our utmost end) is the life of God himself. How high, how noble, how excellent a life doth the blessed God live! Eph. iv. 18. Others live like beasts, like devils; true Christians only, like angels, like God; above these carnal comforts and drossy delights: 'The way of life is above to the wise,' Prov. xv. 24. Atheists, like hedge-sparrows, settling here below, are easily taken in Satan's snares and destroyed. When saints, like eagles, soaring aloft, are free both from his shot and lime-twigs, they are not terrified with the world's affrightments, having armour of proof. Those that are at the top of some high tower, regard not the croaking of frogs, nor hissing of serpents below: like the moon at the full, being fixed in heaven, they can keep their course, though dogs bark at them here on earth; they are not entangled in the world's allurements. The world indeed, like a serpent [1] some write of, when she cannot overtake the fleeing passengers, doth with her beautiful colours so amaze many, that they have no power to pass away till she hath stung them; but they see her emptiness and vanity under all her painting and daubery. Besides, their eyes behold the glorious God in some measure, in his brightness and beauty, and are so dazzled therewith, that as those that look on the great luminary of the world, in its meridian splendour, they can see no glory in anything besides. These poor candles are slighted into disappearance, because the sun himself hath arisen upon them. How quickly, how quietly did Abraham leave his kindred and country, when once the

[1] It is called σχυτάλη by the Grecians.

God of glory appeared to him, Acts vii. 2. Ah, what pitiful fare is the world's most luscious food to them that ever feasted with the holy Jesus!

The old Grecians, who had altogether fed on acorns before,[1] when bread came in among them, made no reckoning of their mast, but reserved it only for their swine. The Lacedemonians despised their iron and leathern money when gold and silver was brought into their cities.[2] When a soul once cometh to 'know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent,' what toys and trifles, what babies and butterflies, are the honours and riches and pleasures of this beggarly world to him! nay, how doth he befool and bebeast himself for doating so much upon specious dreams, and gilded nothings! Ps. lxxiii. 31. Now he is elevated to the top of the celestial orbs, even to heaven, and therefore the whole earth is but a small spot of ground, a little point in his eyes.

The driving of this high and heavenly trade is the sum and substance of this treasure, which I present to you both, as a testimony of my gratitude for the great engagements you have laid upon me. The stork amongst fowls, is said to leave one of her young in the place where she hatcheth them. The Egyptians amongst men, are famous in history for a thankful people, and are recorded to have made eunuchs of ungrateful persons, that the world might not be plagued with their posterity. The master of moral philosophy[3] upbraideth them sharply that steal favours by private acknowledgments. The truth is, a public confession of your kindness, as it is the least, since providence hath given me the opportunity, so it is, next my prayers, the greatest requital I am able to make you. If my pains have yielded any fruit in these parts, those that received it owe the acknowledgment, under God, to you.

Though neither of you love to hear your own praise, nor did I ever love flattery, knowing by too much experience that pride will burn and continue, like the elementary fire, of itself, without any fuel, yet I esteem it my duty to publish some things to the world, for example to others. The place to which I am presented hath not half a maintenance, nor so much as a house belonging to the minister; but the Lord hath given you such compassion to souls, that you have given me both a convenient dwelling and a considerable maintenance, besides the tithes, above seventy pounds per

[1] Eust. in Hom. [2] Sen. de Benef.

[3] Quidam furtive gratias agunt, et in angulo, et in aurem; non est ista verecundia sed inficiandi genus.—*Sen. de Benef.*, lib. ii. cap. 23.

annum out of your own inheritance, that I enjoy, through the good hand of my God upon me, a competent encouragement and comfortable employment. When others refuse to draw out their purses to hungry bodies, the gracious God hath enabled you both to draw out your purse and hearts unto starving souls. Soul-charity is the highest and noblest charity, and such fruit as will much abound to your account at the day of Christ, Phil. iv. 17. Hereby, like wise merchants, you return your riches into the other world by bills of exchange. How much are you both indebted to free grace! Usually the richest mines are covered with the most barren earth; and men who receive much from God very quietly, like narrow-mouthed glasses, will part with nothing without much stir and reluctancy. God hath bestowed on you large hearts, as well as large inheritance. Many a vessel hath been sunk with the weight of its burden. Some mariners, out of love to their lading, have lost their lives; but God hath made you masters of,—not, as many other, servants to,—a fair estate.

It is also your honour that the ark, the worship of the blessed God, findeth entertainment in your house; your whole family, though large, have set meals daily for their inward man, as well as for their outward: your children and servants are commanded by you to keep the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19, and, as if your house were built of Irish oak, which will suffer no spider near it, no iniquity is allowed to dwell in your tabernacle. I have with much delight observed your care and conscience to have all your family present at morning and evening duties. Oh it is a blessed and beautiful sight to behold a little church in a great house! Many great persons think the company of the glorious God too mean for them in their houses; religion waiteth at their doors like a beggar, and cannot obtain the favour to be called in, when the vermin, as in the Egyptian palaces, of pride and drunkenness and swearing reside amongst them, and crawl in every room of their dwellings. The service of the living God, which is the greatest freedom, they count their bondage and fetters; the society of the Lord Jesus is to them, as to the devils, a torment, Mat. viii. Alas! alas! whither is man fallen, that the company of his Maker should be esteemed his dishonour! that the worship of God, which is the preferment of glorious angels, should be judged a disparagement! Ah, how will their judgments be altered when they come to die, to throw their last casts for eternity! then, as that Popish prelate[1] said of justification by faith, That it was good supper-

[1] Steph. Gardin.; Foxe, Acts and Mon.

doctrine, though not so good to breakfast on, they will confess that it is good to die in the Lord; they will cry out, 'Oh let us die the death of the righteous, and let our latter end be like theirs!' how lightly soever now they think of living their lives. The Persian messenger, though a heathen, could not but observe the worth of piety in such an hour of extremity: when the Grecian forces hotly pursued us, saith he,[1] and we must needs venture over the great water Strymon, frozen then, but beginning to thaw, when a hundred to one we had all died for it, with mine eyes I saw many of those gallants, whom I had heard before so boldly maintain there was no God, every one upon their knees, with eyes and hands lifted up, begging hard for help and mercy, and entreating that the ice might hold till they got over. Those gallants who now proscribe godliness their hearts and houses, as if it were only a humour taken up by some precise persons, who will needs be wiser than their neighbours, and, Galba-like, scorn at them who fear or think of death, when they themselves come to enter the list with the king of terrors, and perceive in earnest that this surly sergeant Death will not be denied, but away they must into the other world, and be saved or tormented in flames for ever, as they have walked after the spirit or after the flesh here; without question they will change their note, sing another tune, and say, as dying Theophilus did of devout Arsenius,[2] Thou art blessed, O Arsenius, who hadst always this hour before thine eyes.

Blessed be God, ye walk not in the vicious ways of such voluptuous wretches; but to the joy of all that know and love you, sit like wise pilots in the hindermost part of the ship, dwell in the meditation of your deaths, and thence endeavour to steer the vessel of your conversations aright. Give me leave, honoured friends, out of the unfeigned respect which I bear to you both, which, if I know my own heart, is not so much for the favours received from you, though I shall ever acknowledge them, but for what of God and godliness I have seen in you, to beseech you, that 'as ye have received how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more,' 1 Thes. iv. 1. God hath done great things for you, and God expecteth great things from you: 'To whom much is given, of them much is required.' Where the husbandman bestoweth the greatest cost, there he looketh for the greatest crop. The rents which your tenants pay are somewhat

[1] Æschylus in Traged.

[2] Beatus es, Abba Arseni, qui semper hanc horam ante oculos habuisti.—*Bib. Patr.*

answerable to the farms which they enjoy. Ye have more obligations to serve God than others, and more opportunities for his service; and therefore, having fairer gales, should sail more swiftly than others towards the haven of happiness. Your trading must be suitable to the talents with which ye are entrusted. Perfection will be your reward, and proficiency is your work. Heavenly-mindedness and humility, which are the greatest glory of our English gentry, are excellent helps to growth in grace. Children that feed on ashes cannot thrive. Silly pismires, that continually busy themselves about their hoards and heaps of earth, never grow bigger. Indeed, great persons are liable to great temptations: flies will strive to fasten upon the sweetest conserves. The longest robes are aptest to contract most dirt. Satan, as some write of the Irish to take their enemies, diggeth trenches in the earth, as it were, and covereth the surface of it with the green turfs of carnal comforts and contentments; which men treading upon, and taking to be firm ground, fall into their ruin. But your sight of the glory to be revealed, by the prospective glass of faith, will help you to wink more on these withering vanities. Ah, what a muck-heap to that is all the wealth of this lower world! Naturalists tell us that the loadstone will not draw in the presence of the diamond. Sure I am, the world, notwithstanding all its pomp and pride, glory and gallantry, hath but little influence upon Christians, when they behold their undefiled inheritance. Humility is also helpful to proficiency in holiness; the lofty mountains are barren, when the low valleys abound in corn. As the spleen swelleth, the whole body consumeth; as pride groweth, the new man decayeth. This high wind raiseth strange tempests in the soul: 'He giveth grace to the humble,' 1 Pet. v. 6. God layeth these richest mines in the lowest parts of the earth. Trees, even in time of drought, whose roots are deep in the ground, bear fruit, when corn and grass wither; Christians, like the sun in the zenith, must shew least when at the highest; and as branches fully laden, bend the more downward. Why should the mud-wall swell because the sun shineth on it? We may say of every mercy and excellency we enjoy, as the prophet of his hatchet, 'Alas, master, for it is borrowed,' 2 Kings vi. 5.

If ye please also to peruse the ensuing tractate, possibly it may be some small furtherance to you in your course of Christianity. The intent of it is to discover and direct how religion, the great end for which we are born, and the great errand upon which we are sent into the world, may be made our principal business; and

how our natural and civil actions, and all our seeming diversions, may be so managed, that they may, like an elegant parenthesis, not at all spoil, but rather adorn the sense of religion. I hope the worth of the matter handled, notwithstanding my weakness in the manner of handling it, will make it acceptable to you. I could wish the face of the discourse were clean. I may safely say, it is far from being painted; and pardon me if I suffer the stream now to run in two channels, such as it is I humbly tender,—

Sir, to your favourable eye, whose happiness it is to inherit your ancestors' graces, as well as their riches. It was counted a great honour to the family of the Curios that there were three excellent orators in it one after another; and to the family of the Fabii,[1] that there were in it three presidents of the senate successively. It is your glory to descend not only of a father who walked with God, and of a grandfather who, it is hoped, died in the faith, but also of a great-grandfather, who was famous for serving the will of God in his generation. The holy apostle speaketh to the glory of Timothy, concerning his 'unfeigned faith, which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice,' 2 Tim. i. 15. To the glory of free grace I mention it, holiness in your house did not run only in the masculine race; your tender mother was like Dorcas, full of good works, and a dutiful daughter to the Father of mercies; and your honoured grandmother, yet alive, is an old disciple of the holy Jesus. Oh

Madam,[2] to your fair hands, who are a branch of a noble and honourable stock; but your birth from above is your present greatest credit, and will be your future chiefest comfort. Alexander must derive his pedigree from the gods, or else he thinketh himself ignobly born. To be born of God, to have heavenly blood running in your veins, to be the spouse of the dearest Saviour, to have your name written in the Book of Life, will stand you in stead, and, as many figures, amount to millions in an hour of death, and dreadful day of judgment, when civil and natural privileges, though now favours, will stand for ciphers, and signify nothing. The Jews indeed tell us that women are of an inferior creation, and therefore suffer them not to enter their synagogues, but appoint them galleries without; but they speak more truly and wisely who call women the second edition of the epitome of the world. Souls have no sexes; in Christ there is neither male nor female. Persevere, honoured lady, in your

[1] Plutarch.

[2] Daughter to the Right Honourable the Lord Paget.

how much are you bound to the Lord, that grace should thus run in a blood! Boleslaus, king of Poland, when he was to speak or do anything of concernment, would take out a little picture of his father that he carried about him, and kissing it, would say, I wish I may speak or do nothing at this time unworthy thy name.

Sir, it is your privilege to reap the benefit of their precious prayers, and your piety, more and more to imitate their gracious patterns. How exactly should you walk, having such lights so near to direct you! And how accurately should you write in every line of your life, having such fair copies before your eyes! It is no small advantage likewise, that you are joined to a loving yoke-fellow, who will draw equally with you in the road to Canaan. That you may both walk in the day of your lives, like Zachariah and Elizabeth, that peerless pair, as one calleth them, in all the commandments of the Lord, blameless; that when the night of death shall overtake you, you may expire like the Arabian phœnix, in a bed of sweet spices, the graces and comforts of the Spirit leaving a sweet savour behind you, that your children may be heirs to your spiritual riches, and see the eternal felicity of God's chosen; and that your house may throughout all generations be known by this name, *Jehovah Shammah*, The Lord is there, is the desire, and shall be the prayer of,

pious course, to confute those painted carcases, who spend all their time in priding and pleasing their brittle flesh, and neglect their immortal spirits, to publish to the world that greatness and goodness are not inconsistent. Oh it is a rare and lovely sight to behold honour and holiness matched and married, lodging and living together! As a diamond well set in a gold ring is most sparkling, and as light in stars of the greatest magnitude is most glorious and shining; so grace is often most amiable in persons that are most honourable. The exceeding advantage your ladyship hath this way of doing God much service, is an awakening argument to endeavours after much sanctity. It is a farther encouragement

Your servant, for Jesus' sake,

George Swinnock.

TO THE READER,

ESPECIALLY OF THE PARISH OF GREAT-KIMBAL IN THE COUNTY OF BUCKS.

He who doth but exercise his reason in considering the infinite cost which the glorious God hath bestowed in erecting the stately fabric of heaven and earth, and the curious workmanship which he hath discovered in the several creatures which are the inhabitants of the higher and lower house, (causing his almighty power, embroidered wisdom, and unsearchable goodness to glister and sparkle far more gloriously in them than the stars in the clearest night, or the sun in his noonday brightness,) will easily grant me this assertion, That this great landlord of the world must needs deserve and expect a considerable rent of honour and service, somewhat suitable to the vast charge he hath been at. Who can be so brutish as to conceive that 'the only wise God' should take so much pains, as with infinite counsel to contrive the goodly frame and comely structure of his visible creation from all eternity, and by his omnipotent arm to give it a being, and not intend that his boundless excellencies and vast perfections, written in such a fair print, and large characters, should be admired and adored? That man is the person designed to give him his due and deserved praise, is the next unquestionable concession, no other of God's visible works being capable of his worship. Indeed, man's sight is so bad that he can see little of that beauty which appeareth in the glass of the world; but beasts are stark blind—they can see nothing at all.

Why should God create man with a rational, spiritual soul, and thereby capacitate him for so noble a service as the pleasing and praising himself, if he had not intended him for this purpose? Brutish principles would have been sufficient to have fitted him for brutish practices. If God had made him to eat, and drink, and sleep, and wallow in the mire of carnal contentments, the soul of a

beast might have served his turn. It is impossible that such an intelligent workman should infuse into our flesh angelical spirits in vain, and not appoint us to some honourable work, answerable to the excellency of our natures and beings. Some of the wiser heathen have gathered from the tendency of man's countenance towards heaven, that he is more noble, and born to higher things, than, like a moving carcase, to be buried alive in the earth. Those who, to help the weak eyes of nature, have the spectacles of Scripture, cannot but see more into man's excellency and his end. It is written in such broad letters in the word, that God formed man for this purpose, namely, to shew forth his praise, that he who runs may read it. But alas! alas! what is become of man? Well may God call to him, 'Adam, where art thou?' Man, where art thou? He who, erewhile, like a star, keeping aloft in the firmament of heaven, did glitter and shine most brightly, to the amazement of all his beholders, now declining from that pitch, and falling to the earth, as a comet, doth vanish and disappear. He who was the world's lord, is now its slave and vassal; he who was the master of wisdom, is now sent to school to the very beasts, to learn of them understanding; he who was unspeakably blessed in his love to delight in, and communion with the fountain of his being, is now miserably cursed in his contrariety to, and deviation from, the ocean of his happiness. Ah, this image of heaven is become the vizard of hell! though this princely creature was made to be company for his Maker, to stand as an angel always in his presence, and attend his noble pleasure, yet look how, like a pitiful lackey, he runs sneaking after the drossy world and dreggy flesh as his lords. Though religion were first in God's intention, yet it is last in man's execution. Things without reason honour God in their stations, they obey his will; creatures without sense do him service, they keep within the bounds which he hath set them, and fulfil those ends for which he made them. 'Mine hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens; when I call to them, they stand up together,' Isa. xlviii. 13. Nay, these inanimate creatures are so compliant with his pleasure, that they will thwart their own nature to serve his honour. Fire will descend, (as on Sodom,) and water, though a fluid body, stand up like a solid wall, (as in the Red Sea,) if he do but speak the word. But man, who is most indebted to his Creator, degenerateth most of all; when his inferiors, (beasts,) and his superiors, (angels,) are loyal servants, he proves a rebellious subject.

They who ever had any real sense of the worth of immortal

souls, and any serious consideration of the weight of their unchangeable estates in the other world, cannot but be affected with the madness of multitudes, who turn their backs upon the blessed God, their greatest and only friend, as if he were their greatest and only foe. They who have tasted God to be gracious, and know what fellowship with Jesus Christ meaneth, who have rejoiced in their present gracious privileges, and hope of their future glorious possession, cannot but wonder and pity at that folly which many are guilty of, in disesteeming the noble concernments of their precious souls, and distasting that honourable preferment, and comfortable employment, of walking with the blessed God. How greedily do men grasp the smoke of earthly vanities, which will wring tears from their eyes, and then vanish into nothing!

Who can sufficiently bemoan it, that man, who is capable of and created for so high an honour, and so heavenly an exercise, as to serve his Maker here, and to enjoy him hereafter, should all his time, like a hog, be digging and rooting in the earth, and not once look up to heaven in earnest, till the knife is put to his throat, that he cometh to die and enter into the other world?

What a deal of pains doth the spider take in weaving her web to catch flies! she runneth much, and often up and down, hither and thither; she spendeth herself, wearing out and wasting her own bowels to make a curious cabinet, which, when she hath finished and hung aloft, in the twinkling of an eye, with the sweep of a besom, is thrown to the ground, and herself destroyed in it. Thus silly are many men; how do they cark and care, toil and moil for this world, which they must leave for ever! they waste their time and strength to increase their heaps, when on a sudden all perisheth, and themselves often with it.

Reader, if thou art one of these moles, who live in the earth as their element, carking and caring chiefly how to exalt self and please the flesh, answer God these four questions, which from him I shall propound to thee. I shall allow thee to be thy own judge; only I request thee, for the sake of thy precious soul, to ponder them with all seriousness; possibly through the blessing of God they may make thee wise to salvation.

Quest. 1. Art thou convinced that the true and living God made thee a rational creature, and hath served thee in all thy days with innumerable mercies, upon a nobler design, and for a higher end, than the gratifying thy flesh and sensitive appetite, and following thy particular calling, and minding sublunary vanities? Friend, what sayest thou? Do not muzzle the mouth of conscience, but

give it leave to speak its mind freely. Art not thou satisfied fully in this weighty truth, that the mighty possessor of heaven and earth created thee, and preserveth thee, to worship, honour, and enjoy himself? If thou art convinced, as it is impossible but thou shouldst, unless thou art a beast in the shape of a man, why then doth thy life every day give thy conscience the lie? Dost thou not live without God? Is not religion thy burden and thy bondage? Hath not the world the top and cream of thy heart, and time, and strength? How often dost thou put God off with the world's scraps and leavings? How little is God in all thy thoughts! Is he not forbidden thy heart? Nay, dost thou not daily proclaim open war against him by thy profaneness and atheism, as if he had not the least right to thee, nor thou the least dependence on him, and all this against the convictions of thine own conscience? Friend, dost thou know what thou dost? Why, thou puttest thy finger into the very eye of nature. The eye of the body is a tender part, but how tender is the eye of thy soul! yet thou art all this while endeavouring to put out the eye of thy very soul. Believe it, sins against nature are of a crimson colour; for thy conversation to contradict continually thy very conscience, will bring upon thee dreadful vengeance.

Quest. 2. Answer me again, Is not the blessed God worthy of all thy service and honour? Doth he not deserve all thy love, and fear, and trust—all thy time, and strength, and wealth, and infinitely more? From whom came they but from him; and to whom should they be given but to him? Art thou not bound to him by millions of engagements? Art thou not the work of his hands? Dost thou not lie at his mercy every moment? Canst thou live, or move, or breathe without him? Can he not as easily sink thee with fury, as support thee with mercy, turn thee into hell, as warn thee of hell? Oh think of that place, 'The God in whose hands is thy breath, thou hast not glorified,' Dan. v. 23. Alas! alas! man, though thou makest no reckoning of pleasing God, but banishest him thy heart and house, as if his company were a burden, yet know that thy breath is in his hands continually; if he do but shut his hand, thine eyes will be no longer open, but thy mouth quickly stopped with earth. Ah, how soon can he take away that airy difference between sleep and death! He can wink thee into the other world, and look thee into the unquenchable lake: 'By the breath of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils they are consumed,' Job iv. 8. If thou dependedst altogether upon another man for thy livelihood, thou wouldst think he de-

served thy service, and that it concerned thee to please him. Oh how highly doth it concern thee to worship and honour the almighty God, in whose hand is thy livelihood, life, and everlasting weal or woe! Ah, didst thou but know what perfections are in him, and how indispensably thy dependence is every minute upon him, thou wouldst wonder at thy folly and madness in slighting him, and make it thy principal business to glorify and enjoy him.

Quest. 3. In the next place, tell me, Is not thy conscience convinced that God is in all respects the best master, his worship the best work, and his pay the best reward? Hast thou not knocked many time at the creature's door, entered in, sat down, and fed on such fare as it had to set before thee, and, after all, gone away as empty and unsatisfied as thou camest? Hast thou not found by experience that the creature keepeth a poor, pitiful house? that they who run to it with heads full of hopes, return back with hearts full of heaviness? and shall no learning teach thee? Man, man, where is thy reason? Hast thou no eyes to behold the rottenness of the world's ware, because it is glazed over with gaudy dyeings? Shall the sweet breath of this alluring panther still bewitch thee, notwithstanding all his deformity and ugliness, vanity and emptiness, so as to get thee within his power and destroy thee? Dost thou not see hundreds before thine eyes, of the world's chief favourites, whom she dandled on her knees, and was very fond of, hurried in haste into the other world, leaving all her gifts behind them, and not a button the better for all her fondness and fooleries? Didst thou never observe how she leaveth her lovers in the lurch, and, like a false, deceitful friend, forsakes them wholly in the time of their greatest extremity? 'Man walketh in a vain show; he disquieteth himself in vain.' 'He returneth to his earth, and in that day his thoughts perish,' Ps. xxxix. 8, and cxlvi. As he that goeth to a fair, with a purse full of money, is devising and debating with himself how to lay it out—possibly thinking that such and such commodities will be most profitable, and bring him in the greatest gain—when on a sudden a cut-purse comes and easeth him both of his money and care how to dispose of it. Surely thou mightst have taken notice how some of thy neighbours or countrymen, when they have been busy in their contrivances, and big with many plots and projects how to raise their estate and names and families, were arrested by death in a moment, returned to their earth, and in that day all their gay, their great thoughts perished and came to nothing. The heathen historian could not but observe

how Alexander the Great, when he had to carry on his great designs, summoned a parliament before him of the whole world, he was himself summoned by death to appear in the other world. The Dutch, therefore, very wittily to express the world's vanity, picture at Amsterdam a man with a full-blown bladder on his shoulders, and another standing by pricking the bladder with a pin, with this motto, QUAM SUBITO, How soon is all blown down!

Reader, it is impossible, if thou usest thy rational faculty, but thou shouldst be convinced of the truth of these things: 'Why then dost thou spend thy strength for that which is not bread, and thy labour for that which will not satisfy?' Oh that I could invite and persuade thee to the most gainful trade! 'Hearken unto me, and eat that which is good, and let thy soul delight itself in fatness.' If religion were thy business, God would not serve thee as the world doth its servants: God is such a master, that ten thousand worlds to him are as nothing, yea, 'less than nothing and vanity.' He is a master without exceptions, because he is an ocean of all (and nothing but) infinite perfections. His worship must needs be the best work, because it is itself a reward. Thou canst not deny but the work of saints and angels in heaven is the best work by a thousand degrees that creatures are capable of, or can possibly be exercised in; truly their work and reward is the same, to worship and enjoy the blessed God. They who make religion their business have a taste beforehand of their future blessedness. Religion also bringeth in the greatest profit. The world payeth her servants in ciphers and counters, airy honours, a brutish pleasure, and fading riches, which are worth nothing; but religion here in figures and pearls, which are worth thousands, the precious blood of Christ, the inestimable covenant of grace, and eternal immediate communion with the infinite God. Reader, if profit be the bait at which thou wilt bite, I will tell thee in a few words how much religion will be worth to thee: Truly, two worlds—not a farthing less. 'Exercise thyself unto godliness:' godliness 'hath the promise of this life, and that which is to come,' 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Ah, who would not work for thee, O King of nations, when in doing of thy commands there is such great reward! Friend, who would not cast his net into the waters of the sanctuary, when he may be confident of such an excellent draught?

Quest. 4. Once more: If none of these things move thee, I shall ask thee one question more, and then leave thee to thy choice—What wilt thou do in a dying hour? I say again, reader, if religion be not thy business now, what wilt thou do when thou comest

to die? Now possibly thou bearest thyself up with the streams of carnal comforts; but what will become of thee when all these waters shall be dried up, and nothing of them seen but the mud of those sins which thou hast been guilty of in the use, or rather abuse, of them? Now thou canst do well enough, thou thinkest, without God and his worship; but ah! what wilt thou do when thou comest to look into the other world? Alas! then thy brightest sun of bodily delights will be clouded, thy freshest flowers will be withered, and thy greatest candles extinguished, and leave only a stink behind them. Believe it, death will search thee to the quick, and try to purpose what metal thou art made of. When thou comest to lie upon thy sick-bed, and thy wealth, and honours, and relations, and flesh, and heart shall fail thee, what will become of thee, if God be not the strength of thy heart and thy portion for ever? What will he do to look death in the face, upon whom the jealous God shall frown? We read in Epiphanius of a bird called Charadrius, that being brought into the room where one lieth sick, if he look on the sick person with a fixed eye he recovereth; but if he turn away his eyes from him he dieth. Friend, what a miserable condition will thy poor soul be in when all thy friends and riches shall leave thee, and the blessed God himself shall not vouchsafe thee a good look, but turn away his face from thee? Surely thy disease will be unto death eternal. Thy friends may carry thy body to its grave for a time, but frightful devils will carry thy soul to hell, to remain there for ever and ever. Religion, indeed, is like the stone Chrysolapis, which will shine brightest in the dark of death. The truly religious may launch into the ocean of eternity, and sail to their everlasting harbour, as the Alexandrian ship came into the Roman haven, with top and top-gallant, with true comfort and undaunted courage: let death come when it will, he can bid it welcome. Death is never sudden to a saint; no guest comes unawares to him who keepeth a constant table; but as when the day dawns to us in Europe the shadows of the evening are stretched on Asia, so the day of their redemption will be a long night of destruction to thee. That jailer who knocketh off their fetters, and setteth them at that perfect liberty, will bind thee in chains of darkness, and haul thee to the dungeon of horror, whence thou shalt never come forth.

O reader, these are no jesting matters. I am confident, as lightly now as thou thinkest of a religious man—as if he were only some singular and affected person—it may be thou canst hardly look on him but with a squint eye, or speak of him but with a jeer; yet

when thou comest to die, thou wouldst give a thousand worlds, if thou hadst them to give, for the least drop of his holiness or the least crumb of his happiness. Ponder these four forementioned particulars, and thou canst not but think them weighty questions. Do not, oh do not dally or jest with them; for be confident thou wilt find them one day to be edged tools.

Possibly, reader, thou art one of them that hast heard these sermons preached, and belongest to that parish where providence hath cast me; and then as I have a special relation to thee, I must beg of thee, as upon my bended knees, for the Lord's sake, and as thou wouldst not have them brought in against thee at the dreadful day of judgment, that thou put the will of the Lord, discovered therein, immediately into practice. 'My heart's desire and prayer to God for thee is, that thou mightst be saved.' Oh that I knew what to do for thee which might be effectual for that end! If thou wilt believe the blessed God, the way to the happiness in heaven is to exercise thyself to godliness on earth; there is no going into life but through the strait gate. The devil putteth old men's spectacles on young and old men's eyes, which cause them to think that the way to heaven is broad and large; when God himself hath told us that it is narrow, and few go in it. I have acquainted thee in this treatise what is the price—not natural, but pactional—of salvation; there must be striving, labouring, fighting, using violence, a working it out with fear and trembling, and God is resolved he will not abate the least mite. Oh that I could therefore prevail with thee to set upon it in good earnest! I do not plead with thee for myself, but for thine own profit, that thou mayest be happy for ever; and shall I lose my labour? Neighbour, surely thou believest that these things are not toys and trifles, but matters of infinite concernment; and wilt thou slight them? Alas! to be frying in hell, or living in heaven for ever, are of greater consequence than thy understanding can possibly conceive. The weight of these things hath so overburdened several persons' minds that it hath made them distracted and mad; and canst thou trample them as dirt under thy feet, without any regard at all?

Because I would willingly be both faithful and helpful to thee, I shall earnestly, in the name of the blessed God, beseech thee, as thou wouldst leave these dying comforts with a lively courage, to mind and practise these two particulars, without which thou canst never make religion thy business.

Make sure that thy heart be thoroughly changed. That building which reacheth up to heaven must have a strong and sure founda-

tion. If the watch be not of the right make, it will never go true. He must 'live in the Spirit' who would 'walk in the Spirit.' Natural bodies follow the tendency of that body which is predominant in them. Stones move downward, fire upward; each would be at its centre; that which stoppeth either, offereth violence to it. So it will be with thee; thy life will be according to the tendency of thy heart. If that be carnal, and the flesh predominant, such will thy life be; if that be changed, and the Spirit be predominant in it, thy life will be spiritual also; if the law of God be written in thy affections, then, and not till then, it will be legible in thy conversation. Oh, do not rest in civility, morality, performances, privileges, or anything short of renewing grace. It is the heart by generation chiefly polluted, and it is the heart by regeneration which must be purified, or thou perishest eternally. When an error is in the foundation of a house, it will not be mended by daubing or rough-cast, but must be pulled down and built up anew: 'If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things are become new,' 2 Cor. v. 17.

Oh friend, consider that by the irrevocable decree and sentence of the living God, none shall be saved but those that are converted and renewed; and for the sake of thy precious soul, give thyself no rest till this change be wrought. I assure thee it concerneth thee, for thine everlasting life or death dependeth upon it, John iii. 3; Mat. xviii. 3; Heb. xii. 14.

Be much with God in religious duties. Secret praying, reading, and meditating, are great helps to piety. The bottom of a Christian's building is underground, and out of the world's sight. The greatest part of that trade which a saint drives with God is unseen, and his returns are unknown to the world. Christ giveth his sweetest kisses and dearest embraces to his spouse when she is alone. Jacob met with the blessing when he had parted with his company, and wrestled singly with the angel of the covenant. Bread eaten in secret, how sweet is it! When God meeteth thy soul in a morning or evening prayer, communion with his Majesty will be sweet to thee indeed.

Take heed of omission of duties in the closet. The Amalekite had not eaten in three days, who was nigh death. It is observed that the places under the line are not so hot as some places at a further distance, because, though they have the beams of the sun falling perpendicularly to cause a more intense heat, yet the nights there being longer than in some other parts, the days are not so hot. When the nights are long, the days are very cold; when

there are long omissions of duties, godliness will cool. Ah, didst thou but know what many a saint hath gained by that hidden calling, I am confident thou wouldst mind it, whatever thou didst omit. Remember how often and earnestly I have urged thee to this duty. It is thy privilege, that though thou canst not every day have the showers of public ordinances, yet mayest thou have the watering-pots of secret duties to make thy soul fruitful. Let no day pass without thy morning and evening sacrifices. Fasting is bad for some bodies; I am sure to fast from spiritual food is exceeding injurious to thy soul.

He that runneth into enormities (as a drunkard, or swearer, or adulterer, &c.) he stabbeth his soul; he that omitteth daily duties, he starveth his soul. Now, what great difference is there between the death of the soul by stabbing and by starving? If thy soul die eternally, it will be little comfort to thee to plead that thou didst not drink, or swear, as others. Oh friend, let no day pass without secret duties; if thou risest in a morning, and followest thy calling all day, and liest down at night, and never desirest God's company, or askest his blessing, I would know wherein thou dost God more service than the ox or ass? For shame, friend, do not thus play the beast any longer.

I have in this treatise endeavoured to assist thee by discovering the nature and necessity of making religion thy business. I cannot but think that the reasons which I have laid down for this duty will move any man who is not resolved to make himself eternally miserable. It is no mean mercy that thou mayest adopt all thy natural and civil actions into the family of religion; that though, like ciphers, they signify nothing of themselves, yet having the figure of godliness put before them, they may signify much, and stand for thousands.

I shall, reader, only acquaint thee with some particulars which I treat of in the book, and then leave thee and it to the blessing of God. I am very large in directing thee about the immediate worship of the Lord, as knowing that is of greatest weight and worth. No preparation can be too great for, no devotion can be too gracious in, religious actions. Amongst many other rites and ceremonies of the Jews, it is related that before the doors of their synagogues they have an iron plate, against which they wipe and make clean their shoes before they enter, and that being entered, they sit solemnly for a season, not once opening their mouths, but considering with whom they have to do.[1] Truly, friend, it con-

[1] Ant. Margarit de Ritibus Judæorum.

cerneth thee to be full of reverence when thou appearest solemnly in God's presence. Think of it; he is a jealous God, and will not be mocked; they that dally with him undo themselves. Serious piety will abundantly profit thee, but careless service will highly provoke God. Spiders' cobwebs may better be suffered in a cottage than in a king's palace.

In the next place, I proceed to natural actions, and then to recreations, about both which thy care must be that they exceed not their bounds, and that they taste and savour of religion. Mandrakes, if duly taken, is good physic; but if immoderately, it casts into a deep sleep and congeals the spirits. It requireth much piety and prudence, not to abuse those things whilst thou art using them. Satan catcheth many a soul with these baits, and then throweth them into the fire. But if religion be thy business, that which is poison to others will be nourishing food to thee.

After these I speak to particular callings, that they might be managed so as not to be hurtful, but helpful, to our general callings. I conclude the book with government of families, wherein thou must learn that thy house must be dedicated to God. Religion in thy house must of necessity be minded, or the whole family is cursed. The naturalists observe of the eagle, that building her nest on high, she is much maligned by a venomous serpent called *parias*, which, because it cannot reach to the nest, maketh to the windward, and breathes out its poison, that so the air being infected, the eagle's young may be destroyed; but by way of prevention, the eagle, by a natural instinct, keepeth a kind of agate stone in her nest, which, being placed against the wind, preserveth her young.[1] Satan, the crooked serpent, is ever busy to poison the air in thine house, and thereby to destroy thyself, servants, and whole household. The only stone for prevention is to set up religion. Neighbour, I have many a time pressed this duty upon thee, and I do again in the name of the blessed God charge thee, as thou wilt answer it at the bar of Christ, that thou immediately set up the worship of God in thy family. Thou knowest how many sermons I preached from Joshua xxiv. 15 on this subject, all which ere long thou shalt give an account of; how inexcusable wilt thou be if, after all those warnings, thy family be found in the number of them that call not on God! Good Lord, how dreadful will it be for thee to sink into hell, with thy whole house on thy back!

And now, reader, whoever thou art, out of affection to thy pre-

[1] Plin. Hist., lib. iii. cap. 10.

cious soul and eternal salvation, let me prevail with thee not to use religion as men do perfumes, refresh themselves with them whilst they have them, but they can well enough be without them, but to make it thy chief, and main, and principal business. What shall I say to thee? Assure thyself religion will be thy best friend at last. Oh, if thou hadst but the same apprehensions of it now which thou wilt have on a dying bed and day of judgment, thou wouldst make it thine own business; then religion will be religion indeed, and of infinitely more worth to thee than millions of worlds. All other things will then, like leaves in autumn, fall from thee; but though all thy most loving friends will part with thee, religion will walk with thee in the valley of the shadow of death; it will direct and refresh thee in the pleasant waters of life, and it will protect and comfort thee in those salt waters of sickness, and when thou passest the *mare mortuum*, the sea of death; when the world in thy extremity will serve thee as the herd do a deer that is shot, push thee out of their company. When thy wife and children will, like Orphah to Naomi, kiss thee, and take their leave of thee, religion will, like Ruth, stick close to thee; where thou goest, it will go; where thou lodgest, it will lodge; death itself shall not part thee and it.

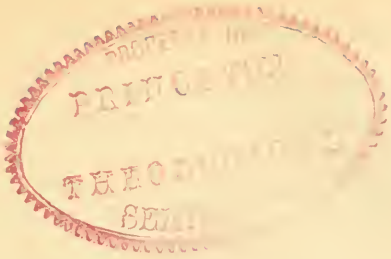
As the noble Grecian answered Philip, when he asked him whether he was not afraid to die? No, saith he, for the Athenians will give me a life that is immortal. Thou shouldst not need to fear death, for religion will give thee a life that is immortal. As the old grave counsellors told Rehoboam, 'Be thou a servant to this people this day, and they will be thy servant for ever;' so say I to thee, Be thou but a faithful servant to religion in this short day of thy life, and religion will be thy servant to all eternity.

If thou art resolved to give thyself up to the service of this noble mistress, possibly this treatise may do thee some little service, by acquainting thee with her will, and directing thee in her work.

If, in the perusal of it, thou receive any profit, let God alone have the praise, and remember him in thy prayers who is

Thine in the Lord,

George Swinnock.



THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself unto godliness. Exercise thyself unto godliness.—1 Tim. iv. 7.

CHAPTER I.

The preface and coherence of the text.

The unclean spring of ungodliness divideth itself, like the third African gulf,[1] into two main cursed channels, atheism and superstition; in one of which all the children of men swim by nature, and very many, as the silly fish, down the streams of Jordan, till they descend into the lake of Sodom, the dead sea of hell, and perish. Which of these two passages are most fatal and perilous, seems worth our inquiry. The waters in the former stream are deepest; atheism denieth the very being of God, but to prevent sinking in these waters, nature herself hath provided some skin-deep bladders; for though there be many atheists in practice, yet there be no atheists in principles. The being of a deity was so fairly written on the tables of man's heart at first, that though it be exceedingly blotted and blurred by the fall, yet it is still legible. Those heathen, as Caligula and others, who endeavoured to extinguish that candle of the Lord, which shewed them a first cause, or being of beings, could never accomplish it. It is a part of that law which is written in all men's hearts, Rom. ii. 15. The orator[2] could say, That no nation was so barbarous as to deny the being of God. Tullus Hostilius,[3] third king of the Romans, who derided his prede-

[1] Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. v. cap. 4.

[2] Cicer. De Nat. Deorum.

[3] Lactant. Inst. Epicurum ipsum quem nihil pudendum pudet, tamen Deum negare pudet.—Mornæus de verit Christ. Relig. c. i.

cessor Numa's sacrifices, saying, that religion did but effeminate men's minds, did himself, as Lactantius in Instit. observes, worship the god Fear. Idolatry is a clear proof that all men believe a deity, otherwise they would never worship, not only the sun, as the Masagetes; but dead men, as the Grecians; whom their governors would appoint, as the Romans; cats, dogs, and horses, as the Egyptians; and anything rather than nothing. Though there be, saith a learned author, nations without kings, without laws, without clothes, yet there are none without a god. When man fell, this truth stood.

The waters in the latter stream are not so deep, but they seem more dangerous; for nature is in some respect a friend to superstition, though an enemy to atheism; it would give God some worship, but it must be in its own way. Atheism denieth the being of a deity; superstition undermineth the authority of God. The atheist would have no God, the superstitious would be his own God; his will, not God's word, is the rule of his worship. In this gulf hath many a soul been swallowed up. The atheist turneth to the left hand, the superstitious to the right hand, but he must turn to neither that will keep his feet from evil, Prov. iv. *ult.*

The text presenteth us with a caution against the poison of superstition,[1] and propoundeth to us the golden medium between the two extremes: 'Avoid or refuse old wives' fables, and exercise thyself unto godliness.'

The scope of the apostle in this epistle is to furnish Timothy with necessary directions for, and to fortify him against the opposition he should meet with in the work of the ministry.

In this chapter Paul doth prophetically forewarn Timothy of, and practically forearm him against, the apostasy of the latter times.

In it, first, The malady is described; and, second, The remedy is prescribed.

First, The apostasy is described. 1. By the sure detection of it. 'The Spirit speaketh expressly.' Had it been doubtful, it need not have been so dreadful; but it is certain, and therefore calls for the more caution.

2. By the season of it, 'In the latter times.' When the world

[1] Fabulosam doctrinam et prophanam vocat eam quæ in ritibus et disciplina vitæ aliquid excogitat præter sacræ scripturæ mentem. Huic opponit εὐσεβειαν, hoc est veram rationem colendi Deum.—*Aret. in loc.* Fugiendum est in disciplina morali μυθικὸν, fabulosum, hoc est quod speciem habet antiquitatis, sed cum vero Dei cultu non congruit.—*Idem, ibid.*

groweth old, it will doat and decline; when it comes to the bottom, it will run dregs. Its last days, which should be best, will be its worst days.

3. By the causes procuring it, 'Seducing spirits, and doctrine of devils;' Satan and his emissaries will, like Samson's foxes, carry firebrands abroad to set the world in a hellish flame.

Secondly, The remedy is prescribed, in reference to himself.

Something he must forbear, 'Refuse[1] profane and old wives' fables.' If thou wouldst not swim down with the tide of those apostatising times, take heed of steering thy course by profane, though ancient customs. Refuse them with scorn, reject them with anger; let thy spirit rise, and thy stomach turn at the very sight of such sins. One way to prevent apostasy is to refuse ungrounded antiquity. The will of the Father of spirits, not the ways of the fathers of our flesh, is to be the rule of our walking. It is well observed that God in no command but the second, which forbids his worship in any way not appointed by his word, threateneth to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, because superstitious worshippers are of all men most strengthened by the traditions of their fathers. They will tell us, Shall we be wiser than our fathers? Now, because they are resolved to sin with their fathers, God is resolved they shall suffer for their fathers. They that will follow their forefathers in sin, for aught I know must follow their forefathers to hell. If Timothy would not share in others' declensions, he must forbear others' traditions, 'Refuse profane and old wives' fables.'

Something he must also follow after; 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.' This is the special help which the skilful physician appointeth his beloved patient in those infectious times to preserve his soul in health. As a pestiferous air is very dangerous to the body, yet for a man to get, and make it his work to keep a sound constitution will be an excellent means to prevent infection. So an apostatising place or people is very dangerous to the soul; spiritual diseases are more catching and killing than corporal; but a spiritual habit of a real sanctity, with a constant care to continue and increase it, will be a sovereign means to preserve it in safety. Bodies without life quickly corrupt and become unsavoury, not so living creatures; running waters are sweet and clean, when standing ponds putrify and abound in vermin. He that is ever trading and thriving in godliness, need not fear that he shall prove a bankrupt. Carts overthrow not going up hill.

[1] Παραιτοῦ. *Rejice*, (Piscat., Beza.) *Excommunica*, (alii.)

Timothy is considerable in his twofold capacity.

1. As a minister of Christ, or in his particular calling; in this respect he must exercise himself to godliness. A pastor must not only some days give precepts, but every day give a pattern to his people,[1] he must not only ὀρθοποδεῖν, but also ὀρθοπογεῖν, not only divide the word rightly, but also order his conversation aright. He must, as Nazianzen said of Basil, thunder in his doctrine, and lighten in his life. Singular holiness is required of those that minister about holy things; as painters, they must teach by their hands, by their lives, as well as by their lips.

Ministers must exercise themselves to godliness—that is, do their duties with the greatest diligence. They are sometimes called 'the salt of the earth,' Mat. v. 13, 14, because they must waste themselves to prevent corruption in others. Sometimes 'the light of the world;' they must consume themselves, to direct others in the way to heaven. Gregory observeth,[2] that the Spirit of God appeared in two shapes—in the shape of a dove, signifying innocency; in the shape of fire, signifying activity. The zeal of God's house, not the rust of idleness, must eat the minister up; he must be a burning shining light, if ever he would thaw the frozen hearts of his hearers.[3] Our churches must not be turned into chapels of ease. Christ neglected his food, spent his strength, wrought so hard that he was thought to be beside himself. We are called fishers, labourers, soldiers, watchmen, all which are laborious callings. We are compared to clouds; the clods of the earth lie still, but the clouds of heaven are ever in motion, and dissolve themselves to refresh others.

But, alas! how many fleece their flocks, but never feed them, as if their benefices were sinecures. The green sickness is the maid's, and laziness many ministers' disease. Who is instant in season and out of season?[4] It was a notable speech of Boniface the martyr, to one that asked him whether it was lawful to give the sacramental wine in a wooden cup: Time was when we had wooden cups and golden priests, but now we have golden cups and wooden priests.

[1] Non tantum sana doctrina, sed etiam pia et religiosa vita, ministri verbi opus est.—*Beza in loc.*

[2] Greg. in 1 cap. Job.

[3] Quicquid dicit Lutherus, quicquid scribit, id in animas penetrat, et mirificos relinquit aculeos in cordibus hominum.—*Melch. Adam. in Vit. Luther.*

[4] Sacerdotum nomina accepimus, non ad quietem sed ad laborem; ut inveniamur in opere quod signamur in nomine.—*Greg.*, lib. iv. cap. 8.

CHAPTER II.

The opening of the text and the doctrine.

2. Timothy is to be considered as a member of Christ, or in his general calling; and so this exhortation belongs to every Christian. In it we may observe these three parts:

1. The act, *exercise.*
2. The subject of that act, *thyself.*
3. The object about which it was to be conversant, *unto godliness;* 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.'

I shall briefly open the terms in the text, and then lay down the doctrinal truth.

Exercise, γύμναζε.] The word signifieth, *strip thyself naked;* it is a metaphor from runners or wrestlers, who being to contend for the prize, and resolved to put forth all their strength and power, lay aside their clothes which may hinder them, and then bestir themselves to purpose;[1] as if Paul had said, O Timothy, let godliness be the object of all thy care and cost. Follow thy general calling with the greatest industry; pursue it diligently, do not loiter but labour about it; lay aside what may hinder, lay hold of what may further, and mind it as the main and principal work which thou hast to do in this world.

Thyself, σεαυτόν.] A Christian's first care must be about his own spiritual welfare. Religion commands us to be mindful of and helpful to our neighbours and relations; the sun rayeth out his refreshing beams, and the spring bubbleth up her purling streams for the good of others. Fire in the chimney warmeth the whole room, but it is burning hot on the hearth. Grace in a saint will make him useful to sinners, but chiefly, though not solely, to his own soul. Timothy, be not like a burning-glass, to put others into a flame, whilst thou thyself remainest unfired, but work hard to exalt holiness in thine own heart; exercise thyself.

Unto godliness, πρὸς εὐσέβειαν.] Godliness is taken in Scripture either strictly or largely.

(1.) Strictly, and then it includeth only the immediate worship of God, or obedience to the first table, and it is distinguished from

[1] Exercet semetipsum ad pietatem qui diligenter incumbit actionibus quibus Deus servitur.—*Est. in loc.*

righteousness,[1] Tit. ii. 11, 12; so ungodliness is distinct from unrighteousness, Rom. i. 18.

(2.) Largely, and then it comprehendeth our duty to our neighbour, as well as to God, and obedience to the second as well as the first table; so righteousness is religion, and in our dealings with men we may do our duty to God; it is taken thus 1 Tim. vi. 6, and in the text. The good husbandman makes no balks in the field of God's precepts. Timothy must make it his trade to pay God and men their due. He must not, like the pharisees, seem as tender of the first table as of the apple of his eye, and trample the second as dirt under his feet; they prayed in God's house all day, to prey upon the widow's house at night; nor as some (whom the world call honest men) who will not wrong their neighbours of the least mite, and yet wickedly rob God of many millions; they steal from him both time and love, and trust and bestow them on earthly trifles. The bird that would fly well must use both wings; the waterman, if he would have his boat move rightly, must ply both oars; the Christian, if he would make anything of his heavenly trade, must mind both tables.

The truth that I shall draw from the text is this:

That godliness ought to be minded as every one's main and principal business. 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.'

Religion must be our chief occupation. The great trade that we follow in this world must be the trade of truth.

It is observable that the more noble and singular a being is, the more it is employed in a suitable working. God, who is the highest in perfections, is not only the holiest, but the most constant and diligent in his operations. 'Hitherto my Father worketh, and I work,' John v. 17. His work indeed is without weariness, his labour without the least lassitude, (as they say of heaven, *Cœli motus quies,*) all God's working days are Sabbaths, days of rest; but he is a pure act, and he is every moment infinitely active from and for himself. Angels are next to God in being, and so are next to him in working. They do God the most service, and they do him the best service; they serve God without sin, and they serve him without ceasing; 'He makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire,' Heb. i. 7. Spirits are the most active creatures with life, fire is the most active creature without life, a flame is the most operative part of the fire: thus active are angels in working for God. Some by *fire* understand lightnings, by *spirits* winds.

[1] Verum et rectum Dei cultum significat maxime sacris Scripturis. Hebræa phrasi timor Domini vocatur. Syrus interp. *justitiam* vocat.—*Est in loc.*

As winds and lightnings presently pass through the earth, so angels presently fulfil God's holy will.

Now as he hath given man a more excellent being than the rest of the visible world, so hath he called him to follow after and abound in the most excellent work. God hath appointed contemplation or vision to be man's reward in heaven, to see God as he is, and to know him as he is known of him; but service and action to be his work on earth, to exercise himself to godliness.

Some read that, Job v. 7, thus, 'Man is born to work, as the sparks fly upward.' Indeed it is the decreed lot of all mankind to labour. Adam was called to industry in his state of innocency, Gen. ii. 15, and since man's fall his work, which was before his pleasure, is now his punishment; if he eat not his bread in the sweat of his brow or his brains, he steals it.[1] He that, like a body-louse, lives upon others' sweat, is like Jeremiah's girdle, good for nothing. But the main work which God commandeth and commendeth to the children of men, is to glorify him upon earth, by exercising themselves to godliness. This is God's precept, and this hath been the saints' practice. This is God's precept, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling,' Phil. ii. 12. In which words we have the Christian's end—eternal life, salvation; and the means to attain it—diligent labour, work out your salvation; he had need to labour hard that would attain heaven. Godliness must not be *πάρεργον*, his by-business, but *τὸ ἔργον*, his main business.[2] The Jews have a proverb, (alluding to manna, which was to be gathered the sixth day for the seventh, because on the seventh none fell from heaven,) He that gathereth not food on the Sabbath eve, shall fast on the Sabbath day. Intimating thereby, that none shall reign in heaven but such as have wrought on earth.

This hath been the saints' practice, 'Our conversation is in heaven,' Phil. iii. 18. Though our habitations be on earth, yet our *πολίτευμα*, our negotiation, is in heaven. As a merchant that lives in London drives a great trade in Turkey, or the remotest part of the Indies; so Paul and the saints traded and trafficked afar off in the other world above, even when their abodes were here below. Godliness was their business, Christianity was minded and followed as their principal trade and calling. It is the calling

[1] Non est panis cujusquam proprius, nec summi quidem regis nisi strenue laboret in vocatione sua.—*Rol. in* 1 *Thes.* iii. 6.

[2] Non dicit *ἐργάζεσθε, operamini* sed *κατεργάζεσθε, accurate magnoque cum studio operamini*, cum multa diligentia et solicitudine pergite vestram operari salutem.—*A Lapid. in Phil.* ii.

of some to plough, and sow, and reap: the Christian makes and follows it as his calling, to 'plough up the fallow-ground of his heart; to sow in righteousness, that he may reap in mercy,' Hosea x. 12. The trade of others is to buy and sell; the godly man is the wise merchant, trading for goodly pearls, that sells all to buy the field where the pearl of great price is, Mat. xiii. 43.

For the explication of this truth, that religion or godliness ought to be every one's principal business, I shall speak to these three things:

First, What religion or godliness is.

Secondly, What it is for a man to make religion his business, or to exercise himself to godliness.

Thirdly, Why every Christian must mind godliness as his main business.

CHAPTER III.

What godliness is.

For the first, What religion is. The derivation of the word will somewhat help to the explication of the thing; the Latin word *religio,* from which our English word comes, some[1] derive *à relegendo,* because men, by serious reading, come to be religious; grace sometimes findeth a passage through the sight into the soul. The eye (as in Austin and Junius) hath affected the heart. Zanchy[2] derives it *à religendo,* or rather *à re-eligendo,* from choosing again, or a second time, because a religious person chooseth God for his chiefest good and portion. His first choice was carnal, of the flesh and the creature; but his second choice is spiritual, of God and Christ, and this choice is religion. Austin and Lactantius[3] (to whom I rather incline) derive it *à religando,* from binding or knitting, because it is the great bond to join and tie God and man together. As the parts of the body are knit to the head by the nerves and sinews, so man is knit to God by religion. Sin and irreligion separate God and man asunder; 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God,' Isa. lix. 2. Godliness and religion unite God and man together; 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people,' 2 Cor. vi. 16. Atheism is a departing or going away from God,

[1] Cicer. lib. ii. De Natur. Deor. [2] Zanch., tom. iv., lib. i. De Relig. cap. 13.
[3] Aug. tom. i. lib. De Vera Relig.; Lact. lib. iv. Divin. Instit. cap. 28.

Eph. iv. 18; Heb. iii. 12. Religion is a coming or returning unto God, Heb. x. 22; Jer. iii. 1. The great misery of man by his fall is this, he is far from God; and the great felicity of man by favour is this, he draweth nigh to God, Ps. lxxiii. 2. *ult.*; James iv. 8. Irreligion is a turning the back upon God, but religion is a seeking the face of God, and a following hard after him, Ps. ii. 3, xxvii. 8, and lxiii. 8. By ungodliness, men wander and deviate from God; by godliness, men worship, and are devoted to God, Ps. cxix. 150 and 38 verses.

The Grecians call it *θρησκεία*, Beza thinks,[1] from Orpheus, a Thracian, who first taught the mysteries of religion among his countrymen. The word in the text is *εὐσέβεια*, which in a word signifieth right or straight worship,[2] according to which I shall describe it thus:

Godliness is a worshipping the true God in heart and life, according to his revealed will.

In this description of godliness, I shall observe four parts. First, The act, it is a worship. Secondly, The object of this act, the true God. Thirdly, The extent of this worship, in heart and life. Fourthly, The rule, according to his revealed will.

First, For the act, godliness is a worship. Worship comprehends all that respect which man oweth and giveth to his Maker. It is that service and honour, that fealty and homage, which the creature oweth and tendereth to the fountain of his being and happiness.[3] It is the tribute which we pay to the King of kings, whereby we acknowledge his sovereignty over us, and our dependence on him. 'Give unto the Lord the honour due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,' Ps. xxix. 2. To worship God is to give him the glory which is due to him. It is a setting the crown of glory on God's head. To render him due honour is true holiness; to deny this, is atheism and irreligion. All that inward reverence and respect, and all that outward obedience and service to God, which the word enjoineth, is included in this one word worship.

This worshipping God is either external or internal.[4] God is to be worshipped with the body. Joshua fell on his face and worshipped, Josh. v. 14. Moses bowed his head and worshipped, Exod. iv. 32. Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed, John

[1] Beza in Col. ii. 18.

[2] Ab *ἐυ bene* vel *recte*, et *σέβομαι colo*.

[3] Cultus religiosus est obsequium supremum illi soli debitum qui est principium et autor tam creationis quam beatificationis nostræ.—*Daven. Determ.*

[4] Cultus corporis et cultus conscientiæ.

xvii. 1. David lifted up his hands to God, Ps. lxiii. 4. The bodies of saints shall be glorified with God hereafter, and the bodies of saints must glorify God here, Phil. iii. 21; Rom. xii. 1.

Inward worship is sometimes set forth by loving God, James ii. 5; sometimes by trusting him, Ps. xvi. 1; sometimes by delighting in him, Ps. xxxvii. 3; sometimes by sorrow for offending him, Ps. li. 3, because this worship of God (as one piece of gold containeth many pieces of silver) comprehendeth all of them. All the graces are but so many links of this golden chain. As all the members of the natural body are knit together, and walk always in company, so all the parts of the new man are joined together, and never go but as the Israelites out of Egypt, with their whole train. If there be one wheel missing in a watch, the end of the whole is spoiled. If once grace should be wanting in a saint, he would be unsainted. There is a concatenation of graces, as well as of moral virtues. Those that worship God give him their hottest love, their highest joy, their deepest sorrow, their strongest faith, and their greatest fear; as Abraham gave Isaac, he gives God all.

What Moses calls fearing God, Deut. vi. 13, our Saviour quoting, calls worshipping God, (Mat. iv. 9, 10,) by a synecdoche, because the former is both a part and a sign of the latter. As when the guard are watching at the court-gate, or on the stairs, and examining those that go in, it is a sign the king is within; so when the fear of God stands at the door of the heart, to examine all that go in, lest the traitor sin should steal in slily, it is a sign that God is within, that he sits upon the throne of the soul, and is worshipped there.

Secondly, The object, the true God. All religion without the knowledge of the true God is a mere notion, an airy, empty nothing.[1] Divine worship is one of the chiefest jewels of God's crown, which he will by no means part with. God alone is the object of the godly man's worship, Exod. xx. 2. His hope is in God, Ps. xxxix. 7; his dependence is on God, Ps. lxii. 8; his dread is of God, Ps. cxix. 122; his love is to God, Ps. x. 1; God is the only object of his prayers, Ps. v. 3, and xliv. 20; and of God alone are all his praises, Ps. ciii. 1; God alone is to be worshipped, because he alone is worthy of worship, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things,' Rev. iv. 11.

To hold anything in opinion, or to have anything in affection

[1] Cave ne quicquam vel mente agnoscas vel corpore colas ut Deum, præter me Jehovam Deum tuum.—*Calv. in* 1 *Mand.*

for God, which is not God, is idolatry. To worship either men, as the Samaritans did Antiochus Epiphanes, (styling him the mighty god;) or the host of heaven, as the Ammonites; or the devil, as the Indians; or the belly, as the glutton; or riches, as the covetous; or the cross, as the papist; is unholiness.

There is a civil worship due to men, Gen. xlviii. 11, but sacred worship is due only to God; and he is a jealous God, who will not give his glory to strangers, nor his praise to images.

The heathen worshipped several gods—the Assyrians worshipped Belus; the Tyrians, Baal; the Athenians, Diana; the Samians, Juno; the Lemnians, Vulcan; the Moabites, Chemosh; the Syrians, Rimmon; the Ekronites, Baalzebub; the Babylonians, Bel; those infidels, as one observeth well, had their *Deos mortuos*, idols; *mortales*, men; *mortiferos*, lusts: therefore it is considerable that when the apostle speaketh of the Gentiles, during the time of their unregeneracy, whilst they served false gods, he saith, they lived 'without God,' Eph. ii. 12. False gods are no gods; 'An idol is nothing,' 1 Cor. iv. 8.

Thirdly, The extent, in heart and life. Godliness is the worshipping God in the inward motions of the heart, and the outward actions of the life; where the spring of the affections is clear, and the stream of the conversation runs clear, there is true godliness. The Egyptians, of all fruits, would make choice of the peach to consecrate to their goddess, and they gave this reason for it, because the fruit thereof resembleth a heart, and the leaf a tongue. As they gave heart and tongue to the false god, we must to the true God. Heart-godliness pleaseth God best, but life-godliness honours him most; the conjunction of both make a complete Christian. In a godly man's heart, though some sin be left, yet no sin is liked; in his life, though sin may remain, yet no sin reigns. His heart is suitable to God's nature, and his life is answerable to God's law, and thence he is fitly denominated a godly man.

In heart, hypocrisy is a practical blasphemy; 'I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and are not.' God's eye taketh most notice of the jewel of spiritual devotion; the eyes of men, of the cabinet of outward adoration. 'My son, give me thy heart,' saith God, Prov. xxxiii. 26. The heart is the king in the little world, man; which giveth laws both to the inward powers and outward parts, and reigneth and ruleth over them at pleasure

The life of godliness lieth much more in the heart than in the life; and the saints' character is from their inward carriage towards

God; 'They worship God in the spirit,' Phil. iii. 3. A great French pear is called *le bon Chretien*, the good Christian, because they say it is never rotten at the core; 'God is a spirit, and he will be worshipped in spirit and in truth,' John iv. 24. In truth, that is, scripturally; opposite to the inventions of men's heads: in spirit, that is, sincerely; opposite to the dissimulation of men's hearts. The deeper the belly of the lute is, the pleasanter the sound; the deeper our worship comes from the heart, the more delightful it is in God's ears.

And life-godliness, as it sets God on the throne of the conscience, so it walks with God in the conversation. Though the spiritual (as the natural) life begins at the heart, yet it doth not end there, but proceeds to the hands; the same water appeareth in the bucket which is in the well. As when the heart is like a dunghill, full of filth, it sends forth a noisome and unsavoury stench in the life; so when the heart is like a box of musk, it perfumes and scents the tongue, and eyes, and ears, and hands, and whatsoever is near it, with holiness. Worship is called the name of God, Ps. xxix., and worshipping, a praising him, 2 Chron. vii. 3. Because as a man by his name, so God by his worship is known in the world; and those that worship him in their practices, do before the eyes of the world give him praise.

Fourthly, The rule, according to his revealed will. Every part of divine worship must have a divine precept. As the first command teacheth us what God is to be worshipped, so the second command teacheth in what way he will be worshipped. The tabernacle and all the instruments thereof, yea, the very snuffers and ash-pans, were to be made exactly according to the pattern in the mount, Exod. xxv. 40; Heb. viii. 5. Typifying that all the exercise of worship used by the church, whether in doctrine or discipline, must be conformed to the written word, Gal. i. 8. Our religion must be not only rational but regular; our worship must be both universal and canonical, *καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν*, Gal. vi. 16; 'As many as walk according to this canon, or rule, peace be unto them.' The saints' service must be word-service, *λογικὴ λατρεία*, Rom. xii. 1; so the word is rendered by our translators, 1 Pet. ii. 2, *λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα*, 'the sincere milk of the word.' The institutions of Christ, not the inventions of men, are the rule of worship. Our work is not to make laws for ourselves or others, but to keep the laws which the great prophet of his church hath taught us; that coin of worship which is current amongst us must be stamped by God himself. We are to be governed

as the point in the compass, not by the various winds, (the practices of former ages, or the fashions of the present generation, which are mutable and uncertain,[1]) but by the constant heavens. Our devotion must be regulated exactly according to the standard of the word. It is idolatry to worship a false god, or the true God in a false manner.

Men indeed are no sooner plucked out of the pit of atheism, but they presently climb the high places of superstition, delighting to go from one extreme to another. As a gay suit of apparel, so the service of God in a gaudy dress, is most taking with carnal eyes.[2] I have read of a popish lady in Paris, that when she saw a glorious procession to one of their saints, cried out, Oh how fine is our religion beyond that of the Huguenots! they have a mean and beggarly religion, but ours is full of bravery and solemnity.[3] But as heralds say of a coat of arms, if it be full of gays and devices, it speaks a mean descent; so truly that manner of worship which is mingled with men's inventions speaks its descent to be mean—namely, from man. 'To the law and to the testimonies: if they speak not according to this, it is because there is no light in them,' Isa. viii. 20.

Such may serve God with more pomp than others, but I am confident they serve him to less profit than others. 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,' Mat. xv. 9; their worship is in God's account no worship. They who made temples, altars, and ceremonies of their own heads, thought that they had remembered God, but he tells them plainly that they had forgotten him, Hosea viii. 11–14. Men manifest abundance of arrogancy in undertaking to prescribe newer and neater ways of worship than God himself, as if they excelled his Majesty in wisdom; but little do they think how exceedingly by such practices they provoke him to fury. Ezek. viii. 3–5 *per tot;* Ezek. xliii. 8, 'In their setting of their thresholds by my thresholds, and their posts by my posts, they have even defiled my holy name by the abominations which they have committed; wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger;' so Ezek. vi. 9; 2 Chron. vii. 20.

[1] Traditioni humanæ nomen religionis applicant, ut religio appellatur, cum sit sacrilegium; quia quod contra authorem est sacrilega mente inventum est.—*Amb. in Col.* ii.

[2] Nihil adeo offendit hominum mentes ut simplicitas divinorum operum.—*Tertul.*

[3] The second commandment binds to the true worship of the true God, which is only as himself commandeth, and by the means, rites, and services which he ordaineth. —*Ainsw. Arrows against Idols*, cap. i.

CHAPTER IV.

What it is for a man to make religion his business, or to exercise himself to godliness.

I proceed to the second particular promised, that is, To shew what it is for a man to exercise himself to godliness. It implieth these three things:

First, To give it the precedency in all our actions. That which a man maketh his business, he will be sure to mind, whatsoever he omits. A good husband will serve his shop before his sports, and will sometimes offer a handsome and warrantable kind of disrespect to his friends, that his calling may have his company; he will have some excuse or other to avoid diversions, and force his way to his trade through all opposition, and all because he makes it his business: he that makes religion his business, carrieth himself towards his general, as this man doth towards his particular, calling. In his whole life he walks with God, and is so mannerly and dutiful, as to give God the upper hand all the way. He knoweth that his God must be worshipped, that his family must be served, and that his calling must be followed, (for religion doth not nullify, only rectify his carriage towards his earthly vocation;) but each in their order,—that which is first in regard of excellency is first in regard of his industry. He is not so unnatural as to serve his cattle before his children, nor so atheistical as to serve his body and the world before his soul and his Saviour. He is so sensible of his infinite engagements to the blessed God, that he allotteth some time every day for his religious duties; and he will be sure to pay God home to the utmost of his ability, whosoever he compounds with, or pays short.

As he sails along through the tempestuous sea of this world towards his eternal haven of rest, he hath many temporal affairs in his company, but he is specially careful that they keep their distance, and strike sail through the whole voyage. If his worldly businesses offer, like Hagar, to jostle or quarrel for pre-eminence with their superior, religion, he will, if possible, chide them into subjection, and cause them to submit; but rather cast them out than suffer them to usurp authority over their mistress.

He that minds religion by the by, will, if other things intervene, put it back, and be glad of an excuse to waive that company, to which he hath no love; nay, he doth in the whole course of his life prefer his swine, as the Gadarenes, before his soul; set the servant

on horseback and suffer the master to go on foot. His voice to religion is like the Jews' to the poor man in vile raiment, 'Stand thou there, or sit thou here under my footstool;' and his words to the world are like theirs to the man in goodly apparel, 'Come up hither, or sit thou here in a good place,' James ii. 2, 3. He doth, like Jacob, lay the right hand of his care and diligence upon the youngest son, the body, and the left hand upon the first-born, the soul. That which was Esau's curse is esteemed by him as a blessing, that the elder serves the younger: he is so unwise as to esteem lying vanities before real mercies; often so unworthy as to forget God, whosoever he remembereth; and so uncivil at best as to give God the world's leavings, and to let the almighty Creator dance attendance till he pleaseth to be at leisure. If he be in the midst of his devotion, he makes an end upon the smallest occasion; and is like the patriarch, who ran from the altar, when he was about his office, to see a foal new fallen from his beloved mare.

But every saint, like Solomon, first builds a house for God, and then for himself. Whoever be displeased, or whatever be neglected, he will take care that God be worshipped. Abraham's steward, when sent to provide a wife for Isaac, though meat were set before him, refused to eat till he had done his errand, Gen. xxiv. 33. Godliness is the errand about which man is sent into the world; now, as faithful servants, we must prefer our message before our meat, and serve our master before ourselves.

He that makes godliness his business gives it the first of the day, and the first place all the day. He gives it the first of the day: Jesus Christ was at prayer 'a great while before day,' Mark i. 35. Abraham 'rose up early in the morning to offer sacrifice,' Gen. xxii. 1; so did Job, chap. i. 5. David crieth out, 'O God, my God, early will I seek thee,' Ps. lxiii. 1. 'In the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look up,' Ps. v. 3. The Philistines in the morning early offered to their god Dagon. The Persian magi worshipped the rising sun with their early hymns. The saint in the morning waits upon heaven's Majesty. As soon as he awakes he is with God; one of his first works, when he riseth, is to ask his heavenly Father's blessing. Like the lark, he is up early, singing sweetly the praise of his Maker; and often, with the nightingale, late up, at the same pleasant tune.

He finds the morning a greater friend to the Graces than it can be to the Muses. Naturalists tell us that the most orient pearls are generated of the morning dew. Sure I am, he hath sweet communion with God in morning duties.

Reader, let me tell thee, if religion be thine occupation, thy business, God will hear from thee in the morning; one of the first things after thou art up will be to fall down and worship him. Thy mind will be most free in the morning, and thine affections most lively, (as those strong waters are fullest of spirits which are first drawn;) and surely thou canst not think but that God, who is the best and chiefest good, hath most right to them, and is most worthy of them.

As a godly man gives religion the precedency of the day, so he gives it the precedency in the day. The Jews, some say, divide their day into prayer, labour, and repast, and they will not omit prayer either for their meat or labour. Grace (as well as nature) teacheth a godly man not to neglect either his family or body; but it teacheth him also to prefer his soul and his God before them both. Seneca, though a heathen, could say, I am greater, and born to greater things, than to be a drudge to, and the slave of, my body. A Christian's character is, that he is not carnal, or for his body, but spiritual, or for his soul, Rom. viii. It was a great praise which Ambrose speaks of Valentinian, Never man was a better servant to his master, than Valentinian's body was to his soul.

This is the godly man's duty, to make heaven his throne, and the earth his footstool. It is the exposition which one gives upon those words, 'Subdue the earth,' Gen. i. 28, that is, thy body, and all earthly things, to thy soul. Our earthly callings must give way to our heavenly; we must say to them, as Christ to his disciples, 'Tarry you here, while I go and pray yonder.' And truly godliness must be first in our prayers—'Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,' before 'Give us this day our daily bread;' and first in all our practices—'Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added to you,' Mat. vi. 33.

Secondly, To make religion one's business, containeth to pursue it with industry in our conversations. A man that makes his calling his business is not lazy, but laborious about it; what pains will he take! what strength will he spend! how will he toil and moil at it early and late! The tradesman, the husbandman, eat not the bread of idleness, when they make their callings their business; if they be good husbands, they are both provident to observe their seasons, and diligent to improve them for their advantage; they do often even dip their food in their sweat, and make it thereby the more sweet. Their industry appears in working hard in their callings, and in improving all opportunities for the furtherance of their callings.

1. Thus he that makes religion his business is industrious and laborious in the work of the Lord. The heart of his ground, the strength of his inward man, is spent about the good corn of religion, not about the weeds of earthly occasions. He makes haste to keep God's commandments, knowing that the lingering, lazy snail is reckoned among unclean creatures, Lev. xi. 30; and he is hot and lively in his devotion, knowing that a dull, drowsy ass (though fit enough to carry the image of Isis, yet) was no fit sacrifice for the pure and active God,[1] Exod. xiii. 13. He giveth God the top, the chief, the cream of all his affections, as seeing him infinitely worthy of all acceptation; he is 'not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit,' when he is 'serving the Lord,' Rom. xii. 11. He believeth that to fear God with a secondary fear is atheism; that to trust God with a secondary trust is treason; that to honour God with a secondary honour is idolatry; and to love God with a secondary love is adultery; therefore he loveth (and he feareth and trusteth and honoureth) 'the Lord his God, with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength,' Mat. xxii. 36, 37. His love to God 'is a labour of love, as strong as death; the coals thereof are coals of juniper,' which do not only burn long, (some say twelve months together,) but burn with the greatest heat. His measure of loving God is without measure.

The Samseans in Epiphanius were neither Jews, Gentiles, nor Christians, yet preserved a fair correspondency with all: a hypocrite is indifferent to any, never fervent in the true religion.

It is reported of Redwald, king of the east Saxons, the first prince of this nation that was baptized, that in the same church he had one altar for the Christian religion, another for the heathenish sacrifices.[2] The true believer doth otherwise; he that makes religion his work, gives God the whole of his heart, without halting and without halving.

Set him about any duty, and he is diligent in it. In prayer, he laboureth in prayer, Col. iv. 12; he crieth to God, 1 Sam. vii. 9; he crieth mightily, Jonah iii. 8; he poureth forth his soul, Lam. ii. 19; he strives in supplication with God,[3] Rom. xv. 30; stirs up himself to lay hold on God, Isa. xxvii. 5; and even wrestleth with omnipotency, Gen. xxxii. 14. When the mill of his prayer is going, his fervent affections are the waters that drive it. There is fire taken from God's own altar, (not the ordinary hearth of nature,)

[1] Eo quod pigrum et tardum animal asinus est.—*Bellarm.*

[2] Camb. Britan.

[3] Innuit certamen et quasi luctam cum Deo ipso.—*Epis. Dar. in loc.*

and put to his incense, whereby it becomes fragrant and grateful to God himself. His fervent prayer is his key to God's treasury, and his endeavour is, that it rust not for want of use. When he goeth to the sacrament, he is all in a flame of affection to the author of that feast; with desire he desires to eat of the passover. He longs exceedingly for the time, he loves the table; but when he seeth the bread and wine, the waggons which the Lord Jesus hath sent for him, oh how his heart revives! When he seeth the sacraments, the body and blood of Christ in the elements, who can tell how soon he scents! how fast this true eagle flieth to the heavenly carcase.

At hearing he is heedful; he flieth to the salt-stone of the word with swiftness and care, as doves to their columbaries, Isa. lx. 8. As the new-born babe, he desires the sincere milk of the word; and when he is attending on it, he doth not dally nor trifle, but as the bee the flower, and the child the breast, suck with all his might for some spiritual milk, Isa. lxvi. 11; Deut. xxviii. 1; he hearkeneth diligently to the voice of the Lord his God; let him be in company, taking notice of some abominable carriage, he will rebuke cuttingly, Tit. i. 13. If he gives his bitter pill in sweet syrup, you may see his exceeding anger against sin, whilst you behold his love to the sinner; he is, though a meek lamb when himself, yet a lion when God, is dishonoured; his anger waxeth hot when men affront the Most High, Exod. xxxii. 19. If he be counselling his child or friend to mind God and godliness, how hard doth he woo to win the soul to Christ! how many baits doth he lay to catch the poor creature! you may perceive his bowels working by his very words: how fervent, how instant, how urgent, how earnest is he to persuade his relation or acquaintance to be happy! He 'provokes them to love, and to good works.'

Set him about what religious exercise you will, and he is, according to the apostle's words, 'zealous' (or fiery fervent) 'of good works;' like spring water, he hath a living principle, and thence is warm in winter, or, like Debris in Cyrene,[1] is seething hot. As Augustus said of the young Roman, *Quicquid vult, valde vult;* whatsoever he goeth about that concerns the glory of his Saviour, and the good of his soul, he doth it to purpose. As Paul saith of himself, 'I follow after, if that I may apprehend,' Phil. iii. 10. The word in the original is emphatical, διώκω, I prosecute it with all my strength and power, that I may attain if it be possible. The word is either an allusion to persecutors, Mat. v. 10–12, for it

[1] Plin., lib. v. cap. 5.

is used of them frequently; so Piscator takes it. Or to hunters,[1] according to Aretius; take either, and the sense is the same, and very full. As persecutors are industrious and incessant in searching up and down for poor Christians, and hauling them to prison; and as huntsmen are up betimes at their sport, follow it all day, and spare for no pains, even sweating and tiring themselves at this their pleasure; so eager and earnest, so indefatigable and industrious was Paul, and so ought every one of us to be (the command is delivered to us, in the same word, Heb. xii. 14) about godliness.

A man that minds godliness only by the by, looks sometimes to the matter, seldom to the manner, of his performances. *Opus operatum*, the work done is a full discharge for him, how slightly or slovenly however it be done. If he stumble sometimes upon a good word, yet it is not his walk; and when he is in that way, he cares not how many steps he treads awry. It may be said of him as of Jehu, 'He takes no heed to walk in the way of the Lord God of Israel with his heart,' 2 Kings x. 31. He makes an idol of the blessed God, (he prays to him, and hears from him, as if he had eyes and saw not, as if he had ears and heard not, as if he had hands and wrought not,) and anything will serve an idol. How aptly and justly may God say to him after his duties, as Cæsar to the citizen after dinner, (who, having invited the emperor to his table, made but slight preparation and slender provision for him,) I had thought that you and I had not been so familiar.

But he that exerciseth himself to godliness hath a more awful and serious carriage towards God. The twelve tribes served God 'instantly[2] day and night,' Acts xxvi. 7, fervently, vehemently, to the utmost of their power; the word implieth both extension and intension;[3] the very heathen could say that the gods must be worshipped, ἢ ὅλως ἢ μὴ ὅλως, either to our utmost withal, or not at all.[4]

2. The industry of a man about his calling, or whatsoever he makes his business, appeareth in his taking all advantages for the furtherance thereof. A tradesman that minds his employment, doth not only in his shop, but also abroad, and when he is from home, drive forward his trade. Indeed, when he is in his shop, his eyes are most about him to see what is wanting, that it may be supplied, to take care that all his customers may be satisfied, and

[1] Est more venatorum persequi feram.—*Aret.*

[2] Ἐν ἐκτενείᾳ, *omnibus viribus, vehementer, prolixe, toto animo.*—A Lapide.

[3] Ἐκτενὲς *dicitur quod in longum protenditur.*—Beza.

[4] Macro. Satur., lib. ii. cap. 4.

to order things so, that by his buying and selling his stock may be increased; but if he walk from home, he doth not wholly leave his trade behind him. If he visit his friends or acquaintance, and there be any likelihood of doing any good, you may observe him questioning the price of such and such commodities, inquiring at what rates they are afforded in those parts; and if they be cheap, possibly furnishing himself from thence; if dear, it may be, put off a considerable quantity of his own. Because he makes it his business, his mind runs much upon it, that wherever he is, he will be speaking somewhat of it, if occasion be offered, whereby he comes now and then to meet with such bargains as tend much to his benefit; so the Christian that makes religion his business, is industrious to improve all opportunities for the furtherance of his general calling. As his time (for he is God's servant) so his trade goeth forward every hour; he is, David-like, as a sparrow upon the house-top, looking on this side and that side, to see where he may pick up some spiritual food. He doth not only in the church and in his closet, but also in all his converses with men, walk with his God. If God prosper him, as the ship mounts higher according to the increase of the tide, so his heart is lifted up the nearer to God, as God's hand is enlarged towards him. If God afflict him, as the nipping north wind purifies the air, so the besom of affliction doth sweep the dust of sin out of his heart. As his pulse is ever beating, so his heavenly trade is ever going forward. His visits to his friends are out of conscience as well as out of courtesy; and his endeavour is, either by some savoury Scripture expression, or some sober action, to advantage his company. He will watch for a fit season to do his own and others' souls service, and catch at it as greedily, and improve it as diligently, as Benhadad's servants did Ahab's words.

If he be eating or drinking, the salt of grace is ever one dish upon the table to season all his diet. He will raise his heart from the daily bread to the bread that came down from heaven. He eateth, is full, and blesseth the Lord. Before he begins he asketh God's leave, while he feeds he tasteth God's love, and when he hath done he giveth God thanks.

If he be buying or selling, he is very willing that God should be a witness to all his bargains; for he prayeth to God as if men heard him, and he tradeth with men as if God saw him. His shop, as well as his chapel, is holy ground.

If he be amongst his relations, he is both desirous and diligent to further religion. His endeavour is that those that are nigh

him in the flesh may be nigh God in the spirit. He is careful that both by his precepts and pattern he may do somewhat for their profit. His house, as well as his heart, is consecrated to God.

As Cæsar's image was stamped on a penny, as well as on a greater piece, Mat. xxii. 20, so godliness, which is the image of the King of kings, is imprinted not only on his greater and weightier, but also upon his lesser and meaner practices.

Godliness is not his physic, which he only now and then (as at spring and fall) makes use of, but his food, which he daily dealeth about; besides his set times for his set meals of morning and evening devotion, he hath many a good bait by the by in the day-time. 'Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud,' Ps. lv. 17. 'Oh, how love I thy law; it is my meditation,' not some part, but 'all the day.' Whether the actions he be about be natural or civil, he makes them sacred; whether the company he be in be good or bad, he will mind his holy calling; whether he be riding or walking, whether it be at home or abroad; whether he be buying or selling, eating or drinking, whatsoever he be doing, or whereso-ever he be going, still he hath an eye to further godliness, because he makes that his business. What the philosopher said of the soul in relation to the body—The soul is whole in the whole body, and whole in every part of it[1]—is true of godliness, in reference to the life of a Christian; godliness is whole in his whole conversation, and whole in every part of it. As the constitution of man's body is known by his pulse; if it beat not at all, he is dead; if it beat and keep a constant stroke, it is a sign the body is sound. Godliness is the pulse of the soul; if it beat not at all, the soul is void of spiri-tual life; if it beat equally and constantly, it speaks the soul to be in an excellent plight.

It was the practice of our Saviour, who left us a blessed pattern therein, to be always furthering godliness. When bread was men-tioned to him, upon it he dissuaded his disciples from the leaven of the pharisees, Mat. xvi. 5, 6. When water was denied him by the Samaritan woman, he forgets his thirst, and seeks to draw her to the well-spring of happiness, John iv. 10. When people came to him for bodily cures, how constantly doth he mind the safety of their souls: 'Thou art made whole, go sin no more,' or, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' He went about doing good; in the day-time working miracles and preaching, in the night-time he often gave himself to meditation and prayer.

He that minds religion by the by doth otherwise; he can, Pro-

[1] Anima est tota in toto et tota in qualibet parte.

teus-like, turn himself into any shape which is in fashion. As the carbuncle, a beast among the blackamores, which is seen only by night,[1] having a stone in his forehead, which shineth incredibly and giveth him light whereby to feed; but when he heareth the least noise, he presently lets fall over it a skin, which he hath as a natural covering, lest its splendour should betray him; so the half Christian shines with the light of holiness by fits and starts; every fright makes him hold in and hide it. The mark of Antichrist was in his followers' hands, which they can cover or discover at their pleasure; but the mark of Christ's disciples was in their foreheads, visible at all times.

Thirdly, To exercise ourselves to godliness, implieth to persevere in it with constancy to our dissolution. Men follow their trades, and open their shops, till death shut their eyes, and gives them a writ of ease; men pursue their earthly works, till death sound a retreat, and command their appearance in the other world. Many a one hath breathed out his last in the midst of his labour: his life and his labour have ended together. 'Let every man abide in the calling whereto he is called,' saith the apostle, 1 Cor. vii. 24.

They who make religion their business, are constant, immoveable, and do 'always abound in the work of the Lord.' Their day of life is their day of labour;' the sun ariseth, and man goeth to his labour until the evening,' Ps. civ. 23. Death only is their night of resting, when they die in the Lord; then, and not till then, they 'rest from their labours.' Saints are compared to palm-trees, because they flourish soon; to cedars, because they continue long; they often set out with the first, but always hold on to the last.[2] The philosopher being asked in his old age why he did not give over his studies, answered, When a man is to run a race of forty furlongs, he will not sit down at the thirty-ninth, and lose the prize. The pious soul is faithful unto death, and enjoyeth a crown of life. As Cæsar, he is always marching forward, and thinks nothing done whilst anything remains undone.

Nil actum credens, si quid superesset agendum.—*Lucan.*

As they are fervent in their work, so they are constant at their work. The church of Ephesus had letters testimonial from heaven; 'For my name's sake thou hast laboured, and hast not fainted,' Rev. ii. 3.

Water in the baths is always warm; as long as there is water, there is heat. Not so our ordinary water; though this may be

[1] Purch. Pilgr., vol. i. p. 416.

[2] True saints in youth always prove angels in age.—*B. Hall Medit. cent.* 1.

warmed by the fire at present, yet if taken off it returns to its former coldness, nay, it is colder than before, because the spirits which kept it from the extremity of cold, are by the fire boiled out of it. The reason is plain; the heat of the baths is from an inward principle, and therefore is permanent; the heat of the latter is from an external cause, and therefore is inconstant.

That warmth of piety which proceeds from an inward principle of a purified conscience, is accompanied with perseverance; but that profession which floweth from an outward motive, where men, as chameleons, take their colour from that which stands next them, their religion from those they have their dependence upon, is of short duration.

A man that minds religion by the by is like Nebuchadnezzar's image, he hath a head of gold, but feet of clay. His beginning may be like Nero's first five years, full of hope and encouragement, but afterwards, as a carcase, he is more filthy and unsavoury every day than other. His insincerity causeth his inconstancy. Trees unsound at the root, will quickly cease their putting forth of fruit. Such men, if godliness enjoy a summer of prosperity, may like a serpent creep on the ground, and stretch themselves at length, to receive the warmth of the sun, but if winter come he will creep into some ditch or dunghill, lest he should take cold.

Travellers that go to sea merely to be sea-sick, or in sport, if there arise a black cloud or storm, their voyage is at an end, they hasten to the harbour; they came not to be weather-beaten, or to hazard themselves amongst the boisterous billows, but only for pleasure: but the merchant that is bound for a voyage, whose calling and business it is, is not daunted at every wave and wind, but drives through all with resolution. He that only pretends towards religion, if a storm meet him in the way to heaven, he leaves it, and takes shelter in the earth; as a snail, he puts out his head to see what weather is abroad, (what countenance religion hath at court, whether great men do smile or frown upon the ways of God,) and if the heavens be lowering, he shrinks into his shell, esteeming that his only safety. But they that make godliness their business, do not steer their course by such cards—they follow their trade, though they meet with many trials; as resolved travellers, whether the ways be fair or foul, whether the weather be clear or cloudy, they will go on towards their heavenly Canaan; 'They go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in Sion,' Ps. lxxxiv. 8.

When men follow godliness by the by and in jest, they take it to farm, and accept leases of it for a time; but if the times come to be such, that in their blind judgments it prove a hard penny-worth, they throw it up into their landlords' hands—*Vadat Christus*, as he said, *cum suo evangelio;* but men that make religion their business, take it as their freehold, as their fee-simple, which they enjoy, and esteem it their privilege so to do, for the whole term of their lives; 'I have chosen thy statutes as my heritage for ever: I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always unto the end,' Ps. cxix. 11, 12.

The godliness of an unsound professor is like the light of a candle, fed with gross and greasy matter, as profit and honour and pleasure, which continueth burning till that tallowy substance be wasted, but then goeth out and leaves a stench behind it; the holiness of a true Christian is like the light of the sun, which hath its original in heaven, and is fed from above, and thereby 'shines brighter and brighter to perfect day,' Prov. iv. 18.

CHAPTER V.

Religion is the great end of man's creation.

I come in the third place to the reasons, Why godliness should be every man's main and principal business.

First, Because it is God's chief end in sending man into, and continuing him in, this world. It is without question, that the work should be for that end to which it is appointed, and for which it is maintained by a sovereign and intelligent workman. Where the master hath authority to command, there his end and errand must be chiefly in the servant's eye. Zeno[1] well defines liberty to be ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας, a power to act and practise at a man's own pleasure; opposite to which, servitude must be a determination to act at, and according to, the will of another. A servant is, as the orator saith well, *nomen officii*, a word that speaks one under command; he is not one that moveth of himself, but the master's living instrument,[2] according to the philosopher, to be used at his pleasure. According to the title or power which one hath over another, such must the service be. Where the right is absolute, the obedience must not be conditional; God having therefore a perfect sovereignty over his creatures, and complete

[1] Laert. in Vit. Zen.

[2] ὄργανον ἔμψυχον.—*Arist Polit.*, cap. 9.

right to all their services, his end and aim, his will and word, must be principally minded by them. Paul gathers this fruit from that root: 'The God whose I am, and whom I serve,' Acts xxvii. 23. His subjection is founded on God's dominion over him.

Now the great end to which man is designed by God, is the exercising himself to godliness.[1] God erected the stately fabric of the great world for man, but he wrought the curious piece of the little world [man] for himself. Of all his visible works he did set man apart for his own worship. Man, saith one, is the end of all in a semicircle, intimating that all things in the world were made for man, and man was made for God. It is but rational to suppose that if this world was made for us, we must be made for more than this world. It is an ingenious observation of Picus Mirandula, God created the earth for beasts to inhabit, the sea for fish, the air for fowls, the heavens for angels and stars, man therefore hath no place to dwell and abide in, but the Lord alone.

The great God, according to his infinite wisdom, hath designed all his creatures to some particular ends, and hath imprinted in their natures an appetite and propensity towards that end, as the point and scope of their being.[2] Yea, the very inanimate and irrational creatures are serviceable to those ends and uses in their several places and stations. Birds build their nests exactly, bringing up their young tenderly. Beasts scramble and scuffle for their fodder, and at last become man's food. The sun, moon, and stars move regularly in their orbs, and by their light and influence advantage the whole world. The little commonwealth of bees work both industriously and wonderfully for the benefit of mankind. Flowers refresh us with their scents; trees with their shade and fruits; fire moveth upward; earth falleth downward, each by nature hastening to its centre; thunder and winds, being exhalations drawn up from the earth by the heavenly bodies, are wholly at, though stubborn and violent creatures, the call and command of the mighty possessor of heaven and earth; and with them, as with besoms, he sweeps and purifieth the air; fish sport up and down in rivers; rivers run along, sometimes seen, sometimes secret,

[1] Hic finis humanæ formationis ut homo sit templum Dei, et Deus ara hominis. Justum est ut creatura laudet creatorem, ipse enim ad laudandum se creavit.—*Aug.*

[2] The ancient philosophers, and the old divines among the pagans, did portray their gods in wood and stone with musical instruments, not that they believed the gods to be fiddlers, or lovers of music, but to shew that nothing is more agreeable to the nature of God, than to do all in a sweet harmony and proportion.—*Plutarch.*

never ceasing or tiring till they empty themselves into the ocean; the mighty sea, like a pot of water, by its ebbing and flowing purgeth itself, boileth and prepareth sustenance for living creatures.[1] Through this womb of moisture, this great pond of the world, as Bishop Hall[2] termeth it, men travel in moveable houses, from country to country, transporting and exchanging commodities. Thus the almighty Creator doth, γεωμετρεῖν, as Plato saith, observe a curious comely order in all his work, and appoints them to some use according to their nature. Surely much more is man, the point in which all those lines meet, designed to some noble end, suitable to the excellency of his being; and what can that be, but to worship the glorious and blessed God, and the exercising himself to godliness?

'The Lord made all things for himself,' Prov. xvi. 4. God made things without life and reason to serve him passively and subjectively, by administering occasion to man to admire and adore his Maker; but man was made to worship him actively and affectionately, as sensible of, and affected with, that divine wisdom, power, and goodness which appear in them.[3] As all things are of him as the efficient cause, so all things must necessarily be for him as the final cause. But man in an especial manner is predestinated and created for this purpose: Isa. xliii. 1, 7, 'Thou art mine; I have created him for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.' There is both the author and the end of our creation: the author, 'I have created him;' the end, 'for my glory.' As man is the most exact piece, on which he bestowed most pains, so from him he cannot but expect most praise. Lactantius accounteth religion the most proper and essential difference between men and beasts.[4] The praises which beasts give God are dumb, their sacrifices are dead; but the sacrifices of men are living, and their praises lively.

God did indeed set up the admirable house of the visible world (floating[5] it with the earth, watering it with the ocean, and ceiling it with the pearly heavens) for his own service and honour; but the payment of this rent is expected from the hands of man, the inhabitant. He was made and put into this house upon this very account, that he might, as God's steward, gather his rents from other creatures, and pay in to the great landlord his due and

[1] *Piscis à pasco.* [2] In contempt.

[3] Plato finem hujus mundi bonitatem Dei esse affirmavit.

[4] Solus homo sapientia instructus est, ut religionem solus intelligat; et hæc est hominis atque mutorum vel præcipua vel sola distantia.—*Lact. de Ira Dei.*

[5] Qu. 'flooring'?—ED.

deserved praise. Man is made as a glass, to represent the perfections that are in God. A glass can receive the beams of the sun into it, and reflect them back again to the sun. The excellencies of God appear abundantly in his works; man is made to be the glass where these beams of divine glory should be united and received, and also from him reflected back to God again.

Oh, how absurd is it to conceive that God should work a body so 'curiously in the lowest parts of the earth,' embroider it with nerves, veins, variety and proportion of parts, (miracles enough, saith one, between head and foot to fill a volume,) and then enliven it with a spark of his own fire, a ray of his own light, an angelical and heaven-born soul, and send this picture of his own perfections, this comely creature, into the world, merely to eat, and drink, and sleep, or to buy, and sell, and sow, and reap. Surely the only wise God had a higher end and nobler design in forming and fashioning man with so much care and cost.

The upright figure of man's body, as the poetical heathen[1] could observe, may mind him of looking upward to those blessed mansions above; and that fifth muscle in his eye,[2] whereby he differeth also from other creatures, who have only four—one to turn downward, another to hold forwards, a third to turn the eye to the right hand, a fourth to turn the eye to the left; but no unreasonable creature can turn the eye upward as man can—may admonish him of viewing those superior glories, and exercising himself to godliness, it being given him for this purpose, saith the anatomist, that by the help thereof he might behold the heavens. Thus the blessed God, even by sensible demonstrations, speaks his mind and end in making man; but the nature of man's soul being a spiritual substance, doth more loudly proclaim God's pleasure, that he would have it conversant about spiritual things. He made it a heavenly spark, that it might mount and ascend to heaven.

A philosopher may get riches, saith Aristotle,[3] but that is not his main business; a Christian may, nay, must follow his particular calling, but that is not his main business, that is not the errand for which he was sent into the world. God made particular callings for men, but he made men for their general callings. It was a discreet answer of Anaxagoras Clazamenius to one that asked him why he came into the world; *Ut cœlum contempler*, That I might contemplate heaven. Heaven is my country, and for that is my chiefest

[1] 'Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri.
Jussit.'—*Ovid.*

[2] Columb. de re Anat., lib. i. cap. 9.

[3] Arist. Polit., lib. i. cap. *ult.*

care.[1] May not a Christian upon better reason confess that to be the end of his creation, that he might seek heaven, and be serviceable to the Lord of heaven, and say, as Jerome, I am a miserable sinner, and born only to repent. The Jewish Talmud propounds this question, Why God made man on the Sabbath eve? and gives this answer: That he might presently enter upon the command of sanctifying the Sabbath, and begin his life with the worship of God, which was the chief reason and end why it was given him.

CHAPTER VI.

Religion is a work of the greatest weight. It is soul-work, it is God-work, it is eternity-work.

Secondly, Godliness ought to be every man's main business, because it is a work of the greatest concernment and weight. Things that are of most stress call for our greatest strength. Our utmost pains ought to be laid out upon that which is of highest price: man's diligence about any work must be answerable to the consequence of the work. The folly of man seldom appears more than in being very busy about nothing, in making a great cry where there is little wool; like that empty fellow that shewed himself to Alexander—having spent much time, and taken much pains at it beforehand—and boasted that he could throw a pea through a little hole, expecting a great reward; but the king gave him only a bushel of peas for a recompense suitable to his diligent negligence or his busy idleness. Things that are vain and empty are unworthy of our care and industry. The man that by hard labour and hazard of his life did climb up to the top of the steeple to set an egg on end, was deservedly the object of pity and laughter. We shall think him little better than mad that should make as great a fire for the roasting of an egg as for the roasting of an ox.

On the other side, the wisdom of men never presenteth itself to our view in livelier colours than in giving those affairs which are of greatest concernment precedency of time and strength. Of brutes man may learn this lesson: When the cart is empty, or hath but little lading, the team goeth easily along, they play upon the road; but when the burden is heavy, or the cart stuck, they pull, and draw, and put forth all their strength.

Now godliness is, amongst all man's works, of the greatest weight.

[1] Cœlum mihi patria, cujus cura summa est.—*Anaxag.*, (*Diogen., Laert.*)

The truth is, he hath no work of weight but this; this is the one thing necessary, and in this one thing are man's all things. Our unchangeable weal or woe in the other world is wrapped up in our diligence or negligence about this; our earthly businesses, be they about food or raiment, about honours or pleasures, or whatsoever, are but toys and trifles, but baubles and butterflies, to this. As candles before the sun, they must all disappear and give place to this.

Moses, a pious and tender father, when leaving them, in his swan-like song, gives savoury advice to his children. We need not doubt but his spiritual motions were quickest when his natural motions were slowest; that the stream of grace ran with full strength when it was to empty itself into the ocean of glory. Mark what special counsel he gives them who were committed to his special care: Deut. xxxii. 46, 'Set your hearts to all the words which I command you this day; for it is not a vain thing; because it is your life.' In which words we have, 1. A commandment; and, 2. An argument. The commandment is, 'Set your hearts to all the words which I command you this day;' that is, 'Exercise yourselves to godliness.' He doth not say, lend them your ears, to listen to them slightly; or let them have your tongues, to speak of them cursorily. No; it is not, set your heads, but set your hearts, to all the words, &c. He doth not say, Let your works be according to these words, or let your feet ever make them your walk; no, it is not set your hands, but set your hearts to the words that I speak unto you. Make it your business, and then your ears and tongues, your feet, your heads, your hands, and all will be employed about them to the purpose. But what special argument doth Moses urge for the enforcement of this great work? Surely that which I am speaking of, the weight of it: 'Set your hearts to all the words which I command you this day; for it is not a vain thing; because it is your life,' ver. 47. Moses had experience that the hearts of the Israelites were exceeding knotty wood, and therefore he useth a heavy beetle to drive home the wedge: it is not a vain thing; it is life. As if he had said, Were it a matter of small moment, ye might laze and loiter about it; but it behoves you to bestir yourselves lustily to follow it, laboriously to set your hearts to it; for it is as much worth as your lives; that pearl of matchless price is engaged and at stake in your pursuit of godliness. Life, though but natural, is of so much value that men will sacrifice their honours and pleasures, their wealth and liberty, and all to it.

The Egyptians parted with their costly jewels willingly to redeem

their lives, as Calvin[1] observeth. The widow in the Gospel spared none of her wealth to obtain health, which is much inferior to life: 'Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.' Throw but a brute into the water to drown it, how will it labour, and toil, and sweat, to preserve its life! View a man on his death-bed, when a distemper is, like a strong enemy, fighting to force life out of the field, how doth nature then, with all the might and strength it hath, strive and struggle to keep its ground! What panting and breathing, what sweating and working of all the parts do you behold! And no wonder—the man laboureth for life. If there be such labour for a natural life, that is but *umbra vitæ*, a shadow to this the substance, which is but the union of the body and soul, and lieth under a necessity of dissolution; what labour doth a spiritual life deserve, that consisteth in the soul's union and communion with the blessed Saviour, and which neither men nor devils, neither death nor hell, shall ever deprive a believer of, but in spite of all it will grow and increase till it commence eternal life? Well might Moses expect that such a heavy weight as this should make great impression, and sink deep into their affections: 'For it is not a vain thing; because it is your life.'

We may say of this work of Christianity, compared with all other works, what David said of Goliath's sword, 'There is none like it:' this is soul-work, this is God-work, this is eternity-work, and therefore of greatest weight, and requireth us all to make it our business; such blows as these three are, one would think, might force fire out of a flint.

This is soul-work: as soul-woe is the heaviest woe, and soul-wants are the greatest wants, so soul-work is the weightiest work; the dangers of a soul are the deepest dangers, the loss of the soul is the dreadfullest loss, the neglect of the soul is the dolefullest neglect. The consequence of the action is frequently specified from the excellency of the person or subject concerned in it. The soul of man is a most excellent piece, both in regard of the spirituality and immortality of its substance, as also in regard of that divine image imprinted on it, those heavenly qualities with which it was at first endowed. Princes stamp not their image, except in cases of necessity, on brass, or tin, or leather, but on gold and silver, the chiefest and most excellent metals. Therefore, though those affairs which concern the body are but of ordinary respect, yet those that concern the soul are of unconceivable weight and regard. One

[1] Hinc clamor ille desperationis index; omnes mortui sumus, hinc facilitas illa in dando.—*Calv. in Exod.* xii. Tanquam si hoc pretio animas redemissent.—*Jun. in loc.*

soul is more worth than ten thousand bodies—than ten thousand worlds.

The greatest thing, saith one, in this world is man, and the greatest thing in man is his soul. It is an abridgment of the invisible world, as the body is of the visible. The body, though no mean work considered absolutely, yet of ordinary worth considered comparatively to the soul. It is a mud-wall enclosing a rich treasure, as a common mask to a beautiful face, as a coarse cabinet having in it a precious carcanet.

The very heathen acknowledged that the soul was the man,[1] the body but its servant; and therefore the Christian may well call it and care for it as his darling, as his only one, as the original is in that place, Ps. xxii. 20. Chrysostom observeth,[2] *Omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given man two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet, that the failing of the one may be supplied by the help of the other; *Animam vero unam*, but one soul—if that miscarry, there is no remedy. Nebuchadnezzar lost his reason, and that was restored; David lost his wives, children, and goods, and yet they were recovered; nay, Lazarus lost his life, and was revived; but for the loss of the soul no power can recover it, no price can redeem, no pearls, no, not the whole world, can recompense its loss.

Well might Charles the Fifth,[3] when solicited by a great counsellor, Antonino de Leva, to cut off all the princes in Germany, that he might rule alone, forbear to put his advice into practice, and cry out, *O anima, anima*, O my soul, my soul!—what then will become of my soul? It was a royal answer which Maximilian, king of Bohemia, gave the pope, who persuaded him to turn good Catholic, promising him much advantage: I thank your holiness; but my soul's health is dearer to me than all the things in the world. (*Hist. Conc. Trent.*)

The apostle calls the body a 'vile body,' Phil. iii. *ult.*, in regard of its original production; it was made not of heavenly materials, as sun or stars, nor of precious materials, as pearls, or jewels, but *ex pulvere limoso et lutoso*, of dust mingled with water; and in regard of its ultimate resolution, it becomes first an ugly, ghastly carcase, and then moulders into earth; but the Holy Ghost calls the soul 'The breath of the Almighty,' Job xxxiii. 4. It was not, as the body, framed of dust, but immediately breathed by God himself; it was not the fruit of some pre-existent matter, but the immediate effect of divine power. The soul is, in a spiritual as well as in a

[1] οὐκ ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος τὸ ὁρώμενον.—*Plat.*

[2] Homil. 22, ad Popul. Antioch.

[3] Val. Rath. Car., lib. iii.

natural sense, the life of the body, especially if you take *vivere* for *valere—to live* for *to be lusty*, and to *be in health*'; for what the sun is to the greater, that the soul is to the lesser world. When the sun shineth comfortably, how cheerfully do all things look! how well do they thrive and prosper! the birds sing merrily, the beasts play wantonly, the trees and herbs put forth their buds and fruits; the whole creation enjoyeth a day of light and joy. But when the sun departeth, what a night of horror followeth; how are all things wrapped up in the sable mantle of darkness! nay, let but the heat of its beams abate, how do all faces gather paleness! the creatures are buried, as it were, in the winding-sheet of winter's frost and snow: so when the soul shineth pleasantly on the body, refreshing it with its beams of holiness, with its rays of grace, the body cannot but enjoy a summer of health and strength. Such a soul in such a body is like a pure wax-candle in a crystal lantern, refreshing with its scent, directing by its light, and comforting with its heat; but if the soul be weak, and full of spiritual wants, the body must needs wither. The soul is the ship in which the body sails; if that be safe, the body is safe, if that sinks, the body sinks for ever.

From all this it appeareth that soul-work is a weighty work, not to be dallied or trifled with, but to be made the business of every man. Godliness must therefore be followed with care and conscience, because of soul consequence. It was our deprivation of godliness which was the soul's greatest loss, and therefore, for the regaining of it, ought to be our greatest labour. God sent his Son into the world for this very purpose, that he might by his bloody passion restore man to his primitive purity and perfection. Godliness is the soul's food, which nourisheth it; who would feast his horse,—*Corpus est jumentum animæ*,—and starve himself? the soul's raiment, both for its defence and warmth, nay, the life of its life. The life of the soul, as Jacob's in Benjamin, is bound up in godliness. Take godliness away, and the soul goeth down into the grave of the other world with unspeakable sorrow.

Godliness, as it is soul-work, so it is God-work; as the excellency of the subject in which, so also the excellency of the object about which, it is conversant, speaks it to be weighty. The moralists tell us, that actions are specified not only from their ends and circumstances, but likewise from their objects.[1] And the divines assure us, that the chiefest source of man's sin and sorrow is his causing the bent and stream of his inward man to run after wrong

[1] Actiones specificantur a fine, objecto, et circumstantiis.—*Eustath. de Mor. Philos.*]

objects. If objects then can vary the species, they may much more add to the degree, to the weight of an action. Where the object is great, no slip can be small.

Evil words spoken, or blows given, to an ordinary man, bear but a common action at law; but in case they relate to the king, they are treason. The higher the person is with whom we converse, the holier and more exact should our carriage be. If we walk with our equals, we toy and trifle by the way, and possibly, if occasion be, wander from them; but if we wait upon a prince, especially about our own near concernments, we are serious and sedulous, watching his words, and working with the greatest diligence for the performance of his pleasure. A lawyer will mind the countryman's cause when he is at leisure, when greater affairs will give him leave, and then, it may be, do it but coldly and carelessly. But if he have business committed to him by his sovereign, which concerns the prerogative, he will make other causes stay, crowd out of the press to salute this, attend it with all his parts and power, and ability and industry, and never take his leave of it till it be finished. I need not explain my meaning in this; it is obvious to every eye that godliness is the worshipping the infinite and ever-blessed God. Surely his service is neither to be delayed nor dallied with, it is not to be slighted or slubbered over. 'Cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently.'

When we deal with our equals, with them that stand upon the same level with us, we may deal as men; our affections may be like scales that are evenly poised, in regard of indifferency, but when we have to do with a God so great, that in comparison of him the vast ocean, the broad earth, and the highest heavens are all less than nothing, and so glorious that the great lights of the world, though every star were a sun, yet in respect of him are perfect darkness, we must be like angels, our affections should be all in a flame in regard of fervency and activity. The very Turks, though they build their own houses low and homely, yet they take much pains about their mosques, their temples—they build them high and stately.[1] David considered about a temple for God. 'The work is great, for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.' Now, saith he, 'I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God.' Upon this foundation, that it was God-work, David raiseth this building, to make it his business, to prepare for it with all his might, as if he had said, Had it been for man, the work had been mean, it had wanted exceedingly of that weight which now it

[1] Turk. Hist., fol. 342.

hath; but the work is great, for the palace is not for man, but for God; and because it is a work of such infinite weight, therefore I have prepared for it with all my might. I can think no pains great enough for so great a prince.

It was provided in the old law, that the weights and measures of the sanctuary should be double to the weights and measures of the commonwealth.[1] The shekel of the sanctuary was half-a-crown of our money, and the shekel of the commonwealth but fifteenpence; the cubit of the sanctuary a full yard, the common cubit but half a yard, compare 1 Kings vii. 15, with 2 Chron. iii. 15. The common talent was one hundred and eighty-seven pounds ten shillings; the king's talent two hundred and eighty-one pounds five shillings; the talent of the sanctuary was three hundred and seventy-five pounds, (*Itinerarium Sac.*) And what was the gospel of this, but to teach us that in things that appertain to God, we must give double weight, double measure, double care, double diligence; though men be slothful and sluggish in the service of men, yet they must be fiery and 'fervent in spirit' when they are 'serving the Lord,' Rom. xii. 11. To give brass money to any is lamentable, but to cast it into the treasury is most abominable. God is a great God, and looks to be served like himself, and according to his excellent greatness: 'Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great king, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen,' Mal. 1. *ult.*

There are some of the heathen that worship the sun for a god,[2] and would offer to the sun somewhat suitable; and therefore, because they wondered at the sun's swift motion, they would offer a horse with wings. Now a horse is a swift creature, and one of the strongest to continue in motion for a long time together; then, having wings added to him, they conceived him a sacrifice somewhat suitable to the sun.[3] Surely much more cause have Christians to take care that their sacrifices to the glorious and boundless Majesty, be some way suitable to his inconceivable and infinite excellencies.

Further, godliness is eternity-work, and therefore must needs be of infinite weight, and is worthy of all our pains and diligence. We esteem lands which we hold in fee-simple to us and our heirs for ever, at a far greater rate, and are more diligent to secure our titles to them, than those lands which we have only a lease of, or a life

[1] Godw., Jew. Antiq., lib. vi. cap. 9, 10.

[2] Joh., Pierrii Hieroglyph.

[3] ὥσπερ τάχιστον τῷ ταχυτάτῳ θεῶν.—*Paus.*

in. Men's estates are of more or less value, according to the term of years they have in them; ministers are often much more exact in their printing than in their preaching. Such in whose ordinary preaching words like a spring run full and fast, and sense, or at least judgment, like a pond stands still, will, if they print, screw their parts to the highest pitch, and spare for no pains that, if possible, sense and sentences, reason and expressions, may keep equal pace. Even those whose sermons, when delivered in their auditories, smell, as Chalcus[1] said of Demosthenes' orations, of the lamp, are the fruits of much prayer and study; yet when they are to publish them to the world, they will survey every sentence, weigh every word, bestow more care and labour on them—hence possibly our proverbial speech, when a thing is done exactly, This is done in print. But what is the ground of this? I suppose one of the chiefest, because men print, in a sense, for eternity. Sermons preached, or men's words, pass away with many like wind—how soon are they buried in the grave of oblivion! but sermons printed are men's works, live when they are dead, and become an image of eternity: 'This shall be written for the generation to come.'

Godliness is a work that relates not only to a few lives, as lands do, or to a few generations, as men's books do, but to the boundless, bottomless ocean of eternity indeed, and therefore calleth for all our care and diligence. Drexelius[2] observeth well out of the father, Our works do not pass away as soon as they are done, as they may seem to do, but as seed sown in time, they rise up to all eternity. A little neglect now may prove an eternal loss; whatsoever we think, speak, or do, once thought, spoke, or done, it is eternal, it abideth for ever.

Eternal life is promised to the diligent, eternal death is the portion of the negligent.[3] The former shall be bathed in 'the rivers of God's eternal pleasures,' the latter shall suffer the 'vengeance of eternal fire.' To be tormented day and night for ever and ever, and to enjoy the 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' are certainly no jesting matters, but of more concernment than we can possibly conceive. Who would not labour hard to attain eternal life! Who would not work night and day to avoid eternal death, eternal woe!

Zeuxis the famous limner made painting his business, and was exceeding careful and curious in drawing all his lines; he would let no piece of his go abroad into the world to be seen of men, till he had turned it over and over; viewed it on this side and

[1] Plut. in Vit. Demost.
[2] Drex., Eternit. Conclus., lib.
[3] *Idem*, Non Consid., cap. 1.

that side again and again, and being asked the reason, answered, Because what I paint, I paint for eternity. So it is with every man and woman in the exercise of godliness, it is of eternal concernment; we pray, we hear for eternity, we read, we sing, we watch, we fast, we live, we die for eternity; oh, how exactly, how diligently, should all be done!

The Holy Ghost urgeth it as a reason why men's eyes and hearts should not be set upon riches, because they are not eternal. In one place Solomon tells us, that riches 'are not,' Prov. xxiii. 5. In another place, that they are 'not for ever,' Prov. xxvii. 4, because things that are not for ever, are as if they were not at all. Eternal life is the true life, saith Augustine; this is but the shadow or semblance of life. The affairs of time are but trifles to the affairs of eternity; but our eyes and hearts must be set upon godliness, because it is for ever, it will do a soul good for ever; our Saviour doth from this argument command us to make godliness our chief employment: 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life,' John vi. 27, where labour for temporal food is not prohibited, but labour for eternal food is preferred.

It was the consideration of this that made the forty martyrs[1] suffer so venturously and valiantly under Licinius, A.D. 300. When Agricolaus, his deputy, and one of the devil's agents, set upon them several ways to draw them to deny Christ, and at last tempted them with an offer of wealth and preferment, they all cried out with one consent, *ὦ ἀϊδίοτης, ὦ ἀϊδίοτης, χρήματα δίδως τὰ ἀπομένοντα,* Oh eternity, eternity, give us money that will last to eternity, and glory that will abide for ever! They slighted that pitiful wealth which was current only in this beggarly world, and made religion their business because it brought them in durable riches. Things that are transient and temporal may, like hasty storms, salute only the surface of our hearts, and away; but things that are permanent and eternal, must, like soft showers, sink deep into our affections, and command all our actions. Ah, did but man know what it is to be eternally in hell-fire, and what it is to live eternally in God's favour, he would do anything, were it never so hard, to arrive at heaven.

The Romans built their temples round; and the rule of Pythagoras was, when men worshipped, they must turn themselves round. Those heathens had confused notions of eternity, and represented it by round things, because such had neither beginning nor end

[1] Basil. 40 Mart.

If they, by the light of nature, saw a little of it, and thence would have their temples and worship suitable to it, then much more we, who have clearer apprehensions by the light of Scripture, must have our conversations answerable.

CHAPTER VII.

The necessity of making religion our business, both in regard of the opposition a Christian meets with, and the multiplicity of business which lieth upon him.

Thirdly, Godliness must be made our principal business, our main work, because otherwise we shall lose our reward. We say, As good never a whit, as never the better. Piety without much pains will redound to little or no profit. How foolish is that builder who, in setting up a house, hath been at much cost, and yet loseth all, because he will be at no further charge. Many 'lose what they have wrought,' 2 John 8. Their works, because not their business, are not perfect, and so to small purpose. 'The slothful roasts not what he took in hunting,' Prov. xii. 27. He was at some labour to catch the beast, but was loath to be at any more in dressing it, and so all was lost; laboriousness to godliness is as the soul to the body, which, being separated from it, godliness dieth and quickly becomes unsavoury.

The reward of godliness is of infinite worth, the end of holiness (as of hope) is the salvation of the soul, the eternal and immediate enjoyment of God in heaven. Now, who can think to attain the place of such ravishing pleasures without much pains? *Iter per angusta ad augusta.*

Things that are most delicate cannot be had without the greatest difficulty; they that will enjoy large diadems must run through many deaths and dangers, and use much diligence. Nature herself will not bestow her precious treasure without much unwearied labour. Dust and dirt lie common in streets, but the gold and silver mines are buried in the bowels of the earth, and they must work hard and dig deep that will come at them. Ordinary stones may be had in every quarry, but pearls are secret in the bottom of the sea, and they must dive low, and hazard their lives, that will fetch up the oysters in which they breed, and enjoy them.

When did we ever find nature so prodigal of her gifts, as to bestow skill and excellency in any art or science, without industry

and diligence. Doth she not force her students to beat their brains, to waste their bodies, to break their sleep, to burn up their strength, before she will permit them to pry into her secrets, to pick the lock of her curious cabinet, and gain any considerable knowledge of her wealth and richness? And can we think the God of nature will give men to know him, as they are known of him—will bestow on them the unspeakable gift, the pearl of price, the Holy of holies, such things as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither man's heart conceived, while they lie lazying on the bed of idleness?

Heaven is not unfitly compared to a hill; among heathens to Olympus, among Christians to Mount Zion. They that will climb up to it must pant and blow and sweat for it. Elijah's translation to the place of bliss was much more speedy and facile than ordinary. We see no panting heart, no trembling hands, no quivering lips, no ghastly looks to be the forerunners of his passage into eternal life. Where the union is near and natural, there the separation is hard and painful, but behold here the marriage-knot betwixt body and soul is not untied. Those loving relations, like husband and wife, ride triumphantly together in a stately chariot to the heavenly court; yet even in this rapture God would teach us that the virgin inheritance must be ravished: 'There appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven,' 2 Kings ii. 11. Why a chariot of fire, but to note that heaven must be stormed and taken by force. Fire is the most active inanimate creature; hereby is figured that laborious action is the way to the beatifical vision. The chariot is made of fire, the wheels upon which it runs are a whirlwind. Activeness and violence are the only way to the blessed inheritance. Who ever entered into heaven with ease? They that will be knighted must kneel for it; they that will wear the crown must win it. 'A man is not crowned except he strive lawfully,' that is, strenuously,[1] 1 Tim. ii. 25. He that will be saved must 'work out his salvation, and that with fear and trembling,' Phil. ii.

Christ, who first bought the purchase, hath already set the price upon which, and no other, the sons of men may come to the possession. There is, indeed, a twofold price of a thing, a natural price, when so much is laid down as is commensurate or proportionable to the thing bought; so the price of heaven was the blood of Christ, Heb. x. 19.

[1] Legitime certare est ad pugnam se preparare et animose adversarium aggredi.—*Bald.*

A pactional price, when so much is laid down, (though inferior to the commodity,) upon which the seller is contented that you enjoy the thing desired; so labour, knocking, working, is the price of heaven, Isa. lv. 3. This price is made of man's future felicity, and Christ is resolved not to abate the least farthing. 'Strive,'[1] saith he, 'to enter in at the strait gate; for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,' Luke xiii. 24. As if he had said, There will be many seekers, many that will both cheapen heaven by a profession, and bid somewhat by performances, but they shall miss the place for want of more pains; 'they shall not be able.' If ye, therefore, have any love to your souls, be not only seekers but strivers; do not only cheapen and offer a little, but come up to the price. Put forth all your strength, as wrestlers do that strive for masteries, as ever you would enjoy those eternal pleasures. Men were as good bid nothing, as not come up to the seller's price.

'All run in a race, but one receiveth the prize; so run that ye may obtain,'[2] 1 Cor. ix. 24. They that intend for the crown do beforehand diet themselves, breathe their bodies, and when they run for the conquest, strive and stretch themselves to the utmost; he that loitereth, is as sure to lose as if he sat still.

The lazy world, because Christ sends chapmen up and down with his wares, to offer them to every house, to every heart, think to have them at their own ordinary rates: but they shall find that grace, which is many degrees short of glory, is not to be had by sloth and idleness; there must be lifting up the heart, lending the ears, seeking, searching, begging, digging, attention of the outward, intention of the inward man, before men can 'understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God,' Prov. ii. 3–5. Though it be easy to let the bucket into the well, yet it is hot work and hard labour to draw water out of the well of salvation. The laborious bee only is laden with honey.[3]

'The desire of the slothful killeth him, because his hands refuse to labour,' Prov. xxi. 5. He is full of wishing, but far from working. As the cat, he would fain have the fish, but is unwilling to wet his feet; his desires are destitute of suitable endeavours, and therefore rather harm him than help him. Like Ishbosheth, he lazieth on his bed till he is deprived of his life. He thinketh to be hurried in haste to heaven, to be carried as passengers in a ship,

[1] *ἀγωνίζεσθε.* Conamini omnibus viribus; extremas summasque vires velut agonizantes exerite, quasi pro vita si vincitis, pro morte si vincimini, luctaturi.—*A Lapid. in loc.*

[2] Sic notat diligentiam et celeritatem.—*Cor. A Lapid.*

[3] O si, O si otiosi. Non est è terris mollis ad astra via.—*Sen.*

asleep in their cabins to their haven, but is all the while in a deceitful dream. There is no going to those heavens where Christ is in his glory, as the sick man came to the house where Christ was in his estate of ignominy, let down in a bed.

He that will be but almost a Christian, must be content to go but almost to heaven.

Idleness is the burial of our persons, and negligence is the burial of our actions. Writing on the sand is easy, but soon worn out, it is marred with a small breath of wind; but writing on marble, as it is more permanent, so it costeth more pains. An idle servant is in God's esteem an evil servant; he doth not distinguish betwixt a slothful and an unfaithful man: his word tells us that he hath bonds for those hands that are folded in the bosom, when they should be working for a blessing; that he hath fetters for those feet that stand still, and stick fast in the mire and mud of sinful pleasures, when they should be running the way of his precepts; nay, that he hath utter darkness for them that will not walk and work while they enjoy the light, Mat. xxv. 26, 30. He that takes his ease in this world must travel in the next.

Two things shew a necessity that godliness must be made our business, if ever we would make anything of it.

First, Because of the opposition we meet with in the way of religion. When the wind and tide are both with the mariner, he may hoist up his sail and sit still, but when both are against him, he must row hard, or never think to come to his haven. The way to heaven is like Jonathan's passage against the Philistines, betwixt two rocks,—the one Bozez, dirty; the other Seneb, thorny; the men of the world will be ever diligent, either with dirt to bespatter their credits, or with thorns to wound and pierce their consciences, that walk in this path; he must therefore have a mind well resolved to take pains, and his feet well shod with patience, that will go this way to paradise. The way of this world is like the vale of Siddim, slimy and slippery, full of lime-pits and stumbling-blocks to maim or mischief us. Saints are princes in all lands; but as princes that pass through a country in disguise meet with many affronts, so do Christians.

The flesh is like bird-lime, which, when the spirit would at any time mount up to heaven with the wings of faith and meditation, hampers and hinders it; it is the holy soul's prison, wherein it is fettered and fastened, that it cannot, as it would, walk at liberty, and seek God's precepts. The devil, both a serpent for craft and a lion for cruelty, doth, out of his hatred to God, make it his constant

business by his power and policy to hinder godliness. As the panther, because he cannot come at the person, he tears the picture wherever he finds it: 'We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers,' Eph. vi. 12. While Satan reigneth in a creature, all may be quiet and calm; but if he be once cast out, he will rage and roar to purpose. While Israel serveth the Egyptians, carrying their crosses, bearing their burdens, doing their drudgery, all is well; but when once they shake off Pharaoh's yoke, turn their backs upon Egypt, and set out for Canaan, with what force and fury are they pursued to be brought back to their former bondage! Christ was no sooner baptized than buffeted; he went, as it were, out of the water of baptism into the fire of temptation. And if the prince were all his time persecuted, his subjects must not expect to be wholly privileged. The cross is tied as a tag to the profession of Christianity, Mat. x. 30. One article in the indenture which all apprentices must seal to, that will call Christ master, is to bear the cross daily, Mat. xvi. The saints are as vessels floating on the waters of Meribah, where (*omne quod flat aquilo est*, as Tertullian saith of Pontus) no wind blows but what is sharp and keen. The Hebrews were no sooner 'enlightened' to their conversion, but they 'endured a sharp fight of affliction;' their lightning was accompanied with a grievous storm, Heb. x. 32. Holiness is usually followed with much hatred and hardship. The enemies of man's salvation are impudent and incessant, ever raging, never resting. What the Carthaginian commander said of Marcellus,[1] may be truly spoken by us in regard of them, That we have to do with those who will never be quiet, either conquerors or conquered; but conquerors they will pursue their victory to the utmost, and conquered, labour to recover their loss. Satan especially is both wrathful and watchful to undermine souls.[2] He is fitly called Beelzebub, the master-fly, because as a fly he quickly returns to the bait from which he was but now beaten. Though emperors may turn Christians, saith Austin, yet the devils will not.

Doth not this fully speak the necessity of making godliness our business? Can such difficulties be conquered without much diligence? Who can eat his way, like Hannibal,[3] through such Alps of opposition without hot water and hard work? If, like Samson, we would break all these cords of opposition in sunder, we must

[1] Plut. in vit. Marcel.

[2] Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum,
Tendimus ad cœlum.

[3] Opposuit natura Alpemque nivemque;
Deduxit scopulos et montem rupit aceto. *Juv.*, sat. 10.

awake out of sleep, and put forth all our strength. Saints are all called to be soldiers; our whole life is a warfare, 'All the days of my appointed time,' Job xiv. 14; an expositor reads it, 'All the days of my warfare I will wait till my change come.' The soldier's life is no lazy life;[1] armies are wholly for action, especially when they deal with such subtle strong adversaries, that assault them day and night without ceasing. Who can conquer three such mighty monarchs as flesh, world, and devil are, or force his way through their temptations and suggestions, unless he fight in earnest, and make it his business? That fire, if ever any, had need to be hot, that must melt and overcome such hard metal; and that hand, if ever any, had need to work hard, that will remove and level such high mountains. If the silly hare, pursued by such a pack of hounds, offer once to stand still or lie down, she is sure to be torn in pieces and devoured. There is a time, saith the holy bishop,[2] when kings go not forth to warfare; our spiritual war admits no intermission, it knows no night, no winter; abides no peace, no truce; this calls us not into garrison, where we may have ease and respite, but into pitched fields continually; we see our enemies in the face always, and are always seen and assaulted; ever resisting, ever defending, receiving, and returning blows; if either we be negligent or weary, we die. We can never have safety and peace but in victory; there must our resistance be courageous and constant, where both yielding is death, and all treaties of peace mortal.

Secondly, There is a necessity of making it our main work, because of the multiplicity of business that is incumbent on every Christian. That stream had need to run freely, and with full force, that must be divided into many channels. That estate had need to be large, that must be parted among many children. Who can count the variety of works that every Christian must be engaged in? how many dangers he must wade through? how many snares must he avoid? how many taunts and mocks must he abide? how many temptations must he conquer? how many graces must he exercise? how many lusts must he mortify? how many duties must he perform? Every relation, every condition calls for answerable duty and diligence; every ordinance must be improved by him, every providence must be sanctified to him. Mercies must, like a ladder, mount him nearer to heaven; misery must, like the famine to the prodigal, force him to hasten to his father's house. His wife, his children, his servants, his neighbours, his friends, his enemies, his

[1] Ad agendum nati milites.—*Cicer.* [2] Hall, *Holy Observ.*, 20.

shop, his closets, his visits, his journeys, do all require suitable service; and who can perform it that is not diligent and sedulous?

Consider him in reference to God's immediate worship; he must pray, hear, read, meditate, watch, fast, sanctify sabbaths, sing psalms, receive the sacrament, and in all walk humbly, reverently, and uprightly with his God. Consider him in reference to poor men; he must love mercy, and supply their necessities according to his ability, and not, like a muck-heap, good for nothing till carried forth; whatever men he deals with, he must do justly, love his neighbour as himself, and as God gives him opportunity, provoke them to mind grace and sanctity; as musk, perfume, if possible, all that he comes near. Consider him in reference to himself; he must live soberly, vigilantly; his heart is like a subtle, sturdy thief, ever seeking to break the jail, and therefore must have a strong guard; his corrupt nature is like fire, and his whole man like thatch, and therefore he must keep a narrow watch; his senses are the outworks, which Satan is ever assaulting, by them to gain the royal fort of the soul, that he must defend them with care and courage day and night. What is said of the husbandman, is true of every Christian. His work is never at an end; the end of one work is but the beginning of another; he must always be employed, either in dunging, dressing, ploughing, sowing, harrowing, weeding, or reaping his ground; he hath no leisure to be idle and lazy, who hath so much work lying upon his hand. Seneca thought philosophy cut him out so much work, that he was necessitated to spend every day, and part of the nights, in making it up.[1] Christianity, a nobler mistress, as she gives better wages, so she commands greater work; that her servants may say well with the emperor, Let no day pass without a line; and with Solomon's housewife, not let their candle go out by night, Prov. xxx.

The French Duke d'Alva could say, when he was asked by Henry the Fourth whether he had seen the eclipse of the sun, that he had so much business to do upon earth, that he had no time to look up to heaven. Sure I am, the Christian may say with more truth and conscience, That he hath so much business to do for heaven, that he hath no time to mind vain or earthly things. That servant who doth ponder the strictness of his master, consider the shortness of his time, conceive the largeness of his task, and believe the weightiness of his work, how it must be done, or he is undone for ever, will be

[1] Nullus mihi per otium exiit dies; partem etiam noctium studiis vendico; non vaco somno sed succumbo, et oculos vigilia fatigatos cadentesque in opere detineo. —*Sen. Epist.* 67.

easily convinced that it very nearly concerns him, that it highly behoves him, to shake off sloth and sluggishness, to gird up the loins of his mind, to give it the precedency in all his actions, to pursue it with industry against all opposition, to persevere in it with constancy to his dissolution, and, in a word, to make it his main business, his principal work.

CHAPTER VIII.

A complaint that this trade is so dead, and the world's trade so quick.

The use which I shall make of this doctrine, shall be either by way of complaint or counsel.

First, By way of lamentation. If godliness ought to be every one's principal business, How sadly should it be lamented that this calling is so exceedingly neglected! What one man is there of many that doth follow this trade, and exercise himself to godliness? Men generally cry out, trading is dead, their particular callings are gone; they make no considerable returns, they stand in their shops all the day idle. But may not God rather complain, the holy heavenly trade is decayed and dead; general callings are left and lost; why stand ye all the day idle, and refuse to work in my vineyard? While the devil has whole droves to do his drudgery, the flesh vast flocks to flatter its fancies, and the world many millions to admire and adore its vanities, 'The ways of Zion mourn, they are unoccupied, none come to the solemn feasts, all her gates are desolated.' While the lawyer's closet is filled with clients for counsel about their estates, the physician's chamber with patients about their bodily health, and the tradesman's shop crowded with customers, Jesus Christ is left alone; though he offereth wares which are of infinite worth, and stretcheth out his hand all the day long, yet no man regardeth.

It is reported[1] of some Spaniards that live near the place where is store of fish, that they will rather go without them than take the pains to catch them. Heaven and happiness, Saviour and salvation, are near men, they are brought to their very doors; and yet men will rather lose than labour for them, rather go sleeping to hell, than sweating to heaven. 'All seek their own, and none the things of Jesus Christ.'

Offer a crust to a dog and he will catch at it, offer him a crown and he will contemn it; offer these men the crusts of vanity, and

[1] Purchas' Pilgrim.

how greedily are they embraced, while the crown of glory is most unworthily despised; like beastly swine, they trample this pearl under their feet, and love to wallow in the mire.

But possibly you may say that there are many that make religion their business, only they are so near me that (according to the rule of optics, which requires a due distance between the faculty and the object) I cannot behold them; they abound in every country, parish, family; all are Christians, and make the worship of God their main work.

I must answer as he did when he saw the vast army of Antiochus, There are many men, but few soldiers; many mouths, but few hands: there are many nominal, but few real Christians; many that flourish like fencers, beating only the air, but few that fight in earnest the good fight of faith. Godliness hath many complimental servants, that will give her the cap and the knee, a few good words and outward ceremonies; but godliness hath few faithful friends, that make her the mistress of their affections, that give her the command of their hearts, and that wait upon her, and walk with her all the day long. Pretenders to her service are indeed like the sand of the sea, numerous; but practitioners or faithful servants are like the pearl of the sea, rare and precious; many court her, but few marry her; for indeed men generally deal with godliness as the Germans with the Italians, or the Dutch with the Spaniards, hold a fair outward correspondency, enough to serve for mutual trade and traffic, but enter not into a near familiarity; they have no great intimacy with godliness; it is rather a stranger to them, whom now and then they bestow a visit on for fashion sake, than an indweller or constant inhabitant.

Lepidus Major, a loose Roman, when his comrades were exercising themselves in the camp, would lay himself down to sleep in the shade, and cry out, *Utinam hoc esset laborare*, Would this were all the duty I were to do. Such soldiers are many who pretend to fight under Christ's banner; when they should be watching their souls, and warring with Satan and sin, they are sleeping and snoring, as if that were the way to work out their salvations. Reader, I must acquaint thee with the physician's rule, that *Spontaneæ lassitudines morbos loquuntur*, Weariness without some apparent cause is a sign of a diseased body; so thy laziness doth speak a very unsound soul.

This complaint is urged with a threefold consideration.

First, How eager is the worldling for wealth and earthly things! Though they loiter about the meat which endureth to eternal life,

yet they can labour for the meat that perisheth; though they are so negligent about the kingdom of heaven, yet the kingdom of earth suffereth violence. What pains do the mariners take for treasure! What perils doth the soldier undergo for plunder! What labour and industry doth the husbandman use for profit! he riseth early, sits up late, denieth himself, loseth his sleep, rides and runs to and fro, embraceth all opportunities, is eaten up almost with cares and fears, all for the earthly mammon; whilst the heavenly mansions are like the unknown part of the world, which no man regardeth or looketh after; they 'pant after the dust of the earth,' as greedily as hot creatures do after the air to cool their scorched entrails, Amos ii. 7. The serpent's curse is entailed on that poisonous brood; the dust is their diet, they feed on ashes, Gen. iii. 14; Amos vii. They laugh at dangers, and trample upon difficulties, they force their way through darkness and the shadow of death, through stifling damps and overflowing floods, through rocks and mountains, in the pursuit of earthly treasures, Job xxviii. 9–11. It is said of the Dutch, they are so industrious at navigation, that, if it were possible to sail in ships to heaven, they would not come short of that haven. Ah, what pity is it that this jewel should hang in a swine's snout, which would so well become the Christian's finger; that this diligence, this violence, should be exercised about men's earthly and particular, which would so well suit their heavenly and general, calling. The ambitious person, like the panther, is so greedy of the poisonous aconite (hung up by the hunters purposely in vessels above their reach[1]) of air and honour, that he never leaves leaping and straining thereat till he breaks and bursts himself in sunder.

The covetous man, saith one, that hath more than enough, yet perplexeth himself with his own wants, look how like a fool he goeth, leading his horse in his hand, and carrying his saddle on his back, till he be pickled in his own sweat, and killed with cares, when his horse would with ease carry him and his saddle. The voluptuous man, like the drone, is busy about the glass of water baited with honey; in it he labours and wearieth himself, even till he be drowned.

How do men, like the Israelites in the Egyptian bondage, travel up and down, and even weary themselves to gather straw! What pains do they take to hew unto themselves broken cisterns! Their chief strife is, with the toads, who shall fall asleep with most earth in their paws, who shall leave this world with most wealth in their

[1] Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. viii. cap. 27.

hands; their parts and gifts, their time and talents, are all improved to help forward their earthly trade; they are 'wiser in their generation than the children of light.'

Oh how lamentable is it that the onions and garlic of Egypt are preferred before the milk and honey of Canaan![1] Luther tells us of a nobleman at Vienna, in the time of his abode there, which made a great supper, and in the midst of his mirth belched out this windy and blasphemous speech, If God will leave me this world to live and enjoy my pleasure therein but a thousand years, then let him take his heaven to himself. This man spake what most men think; the bramble of their bodies reigneth, and fire ariseth out of it to consume the cedar of their souls.

The heathen have admired and bemoaned man's industry about earth;[2] they have wondered what made man, who is of an erect countenance looking up to heaven, thus to bow down and bury himself alive in the earth. Tertullian stood amazed at the folly of the Romans,[3] who would undergo all manner of hazards and hardships to be consul, which he fitly calls one year's fleeting joy. The prophet tells such that they 'rejoice in a thing of nought,' Amos vii. Nay, the forementioned moralist tells us, that such worldlings, *operose nihil agunt*, take a great deal of pains to do nothing. That their whole life is but a laborious loitering, or at most a more painful kind of playing; their account will be nothing but ciphers; like children, they run up and down, and labour hard to catch a gaudy butterfly, which, when caught, will foul their fingers and fly from them. O mortal men, 'how long will ye love vanity, and follow after leasing?' Ps. iv.

Is it not sad, that so noble a being as man's soul should be wholly taken up with such mean, sordid things? That phrase in Ps. xxiv. 5, 'That hath not lift up his soul unto vanity,' is read by Arius Montanus, 'He that hath not received his soul in vain.' Oh how many receive their souls in vain, making no more use of them than the swine, of whom the philosopher observes, *Cujus anima pro sale*, their souls are only for salt to keep their bodies from stinking. Who would not grieve to think that so choice a piece should be employed about so vain a use!

Reader, if one should be entrusted with the education of a great prince, (who was descended of the blood-royal, and heir to a large empire,) and should set him only to rake in dunghills, or cleanse ditches, thou wouldst exceedingly condemn such a governor.

[1] Jupiter asseruit terram mihi, tu assere cœlum.

[2] Sen., lib. vi. nat. cap. 26.

[3] Tertul. de corona militis.

Wouldst thou not think, It is pity, indeed, that so noble a person should be busied about such low, unworthy projects? God hath entrusted thee with a precious soul, descended highly, even from God himself, claiming kindred with the glorious angels, and capable of inheriting that kingdom, to which the most glorious empires of the world are but muck-heaps. Art thou not one of them that employ this princely soul altogether about unsuitable and earthly practices, and causing it (as the lapwing, though it have a coronet on its head) to feed on excrements? It was one cause of Jeremiah's sad lamentation, that 'the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold,' should be esteemed as 'earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter;' that they which were 'brought up in scarlet,' should 'embrace dunghills,' Lam. iv. 2, 5. Have not we more cause of sorrow that men's souls, the precious sons of God, should be put to no better use than earthen pitchers; that they which should be brought up delicately in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, should be busy about dross, and embrace dunghills; that thy precious soul should thus lackey after earth and vanity, when it should, like an angel, be always standing and waiting in the presence of God?

Who can read the stories how Domitian the king spent his time in catching flies; Solyman the Magnificent in making arrow-heads; Achmat the last in making strings for bows; Harcatius, the king of Persia, in catching moles; Caligula, the emperor, in playing the poet; Nero, the emperor, in fiddling; and not admire at their folly, that such great princes should busy themselves in things so infinitely below their places. But thy folly, reader, (if one of them I am writing of,) is far greater, in that thy practices are more below thy spiritual and heavenly principle. May I not say to thee, as Philip to Alexander, when he heard him singing, Art thou not ashamed, being a king's son, to sing so well? Art thou not ashamed, being an immortal angelical substance, the offspring of God, and capable of his likeness and love, to be glued as a toad-stool to the earth, to spend thy time and strength, venture the perishing of thy mortal body, and immortal soul too, for that meat which perisheth? It is storied of Pope Sixtus the Fifth that he sold his soul to the devil, for seven years' enjoyment of the popedom. What fool ever bought so dear? what madman ever sold so cheap? yet every worldly person doth implicitly the same with this pope. He selleth what is more worth than all the world for a little wind. Ah, how costly is that treasure which makes him a beggar to all eternity!

O Lord, what a foolish, silly thing is man, to prize and take pains

for husks before bread, vanity before solidity, a shadow before the substance, the world's scraps before the costly feast, the dirty kennels before the crystal water of life, an apple before paradise, a mess of pottage before the birthright, and the least fleeting and inconstant good before the greatest, truest, and eternal good. Their particular callings are but about earth—the lowest, meanest, and vilest of all the elements in these callings; they deal but with men and brutes; their gains here at best cannot be large, because their lives here cannot be long; and yet how eagerly are they pursued! how closely are they followed! how constantly are they busied about them! Their general callings are about their souls, their eternal salvations; in these they have to do with the blessed God, the lovely Saviour, in communion with whom is heaven upon earth; their gains here are above their thoughts, and beyond their most enlarged desires, no less than infinite and eternal! The profit of godliness is invaluable above price. 'It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof: It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold,' Job xxviii. 15–20; yet how lingeringly is this calling entered upon, how lazily is it followed, and how quickly cast off. O foolish man, who hath bewitched thee, that thou dost thus dislike and disobey the truth?

I cannot more fitly resemble man than to a silly hen, which, though much good corn lie before her, takes little notice of it, but still scrapes in the earth. The favour of God, the promises of the gospel, the covenant of grace, the blood of Christ, the embroidery of the Spirit, the life of faith, the hope of heaven, joy in the Holy Ghost, are laid before man; yet he overlooks them all, and lives like a mole, digging and delving in the earth.

Though men see before their eyes a period and end of all earthly perfections, that the beauty, bravery of all earthly things is but like a fair picture drawn on ice, quickly perishing; that their riches and estates are but like snow, which children take much pains to rake and scrape together to make a ball of, which upon the sun's shining on, it presently melteth away; though they see daily men that hoarded up silver, and wrought hard for wealth, hurried away into the other world, leaving all their heaps behind them; yet they will take no warning, but, as the silly lark, still play with the feather in

the glass till they are caught and destroyed by the fowler. Men wrong themselves, and misconstrue God, who, as if he had hidden those things because he would have them sought, and laid the other open for neglect, bend themselves only to the seeking of those earthly commodities, and do no more mind heaven than if there were none. If we would imagine a beast to have reason, how could he be more absurd in his choice?

What a beast is he to love his silver above his soul, and lose his God for a little corruptible gold. While he lives, like the king of Armenia, by Marc. Anton.,[1] he is a close prisoner in golden fetters; and when he dieth, this worldling may say to his darling, as Cornelius Agrippa to his familiar spirit near his end, *Abi, perdita bestia, quæ me perdidisti*, Begone, thou wicked wretch, thou hast undone me.

It was good counsel which was given John, the third king of Portugal, to meditate a quarter of an hour every day on that divine sentence, (and oh that, reader, I could persuade thee to it!) 'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?' Mat. xvi. I have read of a philosopher, who, living near a blacksmith, and hearing him up every morning at his hammer and anvil, before he could get out of his bed to his book, professed himself much ashamed that such an ignoble trade as a smith's should be more diligently attended than his more serious and excellent studies. What sayest thou, reader; dost thou not blush to think that worldlings are more busy and laborious about the low things, the rattles and trifles of this life, than thou art about the high affairs of God and thy soul, the noble and serious concernments of eternity?

CHAPTER IX.

The complaint continued, that this calling is so much neglected, when superstition and sin are embraced and diligently followed.

Secondly, How do men make superstition and idolatry their business? Though they are careless about divine institutions, yet they are zealous for human traditions. How zealous were the pharisees for the inventions of their elders! they called them *Mashlamathhath*, completions or perfections, esteeming them both helpful to

[1] Plut. in vit. Anton.

the observation of the law of God, and also to the perfection of it. Superstitious persons do naturally think that their postures, gestures, ceremonies, and additions, do render the worship of God more comely and more complete; but truly such embrace a cloud instead of Juno, worship the shadow of Christ, whilst the prince himself goeth unsaluted. Men are exceeding prone to, and earnest for, such vain and false ways and worship, partly because it is pleasing to corrupt spirits, who naturally love a fair show in the flesh; a pompous holiness suits best with a proud heart; partly because these traditions were received from their ancestors; and as Austin observed in his time, men were resolved, right or wrong, to be followers of their fathers. Suitable to which, Cicero said, I will never forsake that way of divine service which I have received from my forefathers, for any man's pleasure, or by any man's persuasion; no, not though Christ himself died to redeem them from their 'vain conversations, received by tradition from their fathers,' 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Hence, though they are so backward where God commands, yet they are forward when men command. What an outcry doth Micah make for his idol! What a privy search doth Laban make for his image! Gideon must die for throwing down the altar of Baal. How earnest are many for priests, tapers, altars, sacrifices, days, meats, consecrations, the holy of holies, crossings and cringings! In these their zeal is hot, boiling over to the scalding of themselves and others. Though this fervency is aptly compared to a ship without ballast, overtired with sails, which in a storm casts away all aboard her, they disesteem their estates and possessions in comparison of idolatry and superstition. Such persons are not only liberal, but lavish. Jeroboam will be at great cost for his idols; they must be not iron or brazen, no, not silver, but golden calves; not gilded over, but massy, molten gold. 'They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god, and they fall down and worship it,' Isa. xlvi. 6. The Israelites will spare their jewels for their idols, Exod. xxxii. 3. Micah's mother, to make molten and graven images, will lay out eleven hundred shekels of silver, Judges xvii. 2, 3. The papists are so prodigal,—though it is the less wonder in them, because they hold such actions meritorious of salvation, (and what would not a man give or do to be saved?)—that not only their churches, but even cloisters, are stuck and stuffed with costly, pearly presents to their supposed saints. The Indians in the isle of Ceylon, having a consecrated ape's tooth got from them, offered an incredible mass of treasure to recover it. How many zealots, that will hardly give a

penny to the relief of a poor Christian, throw away pounds for the maintenance of superstition!

They slight their relations to further their idolatrous devotion. The superstitious Jews would sacrifice their children to Moloch, 2 Kings xvii. 17. The Carthaginians at one time,[1] (after they had received an overthrow by Agathocles,) sacrificed two hundred of their prime nobility to appease their incensed deity. Good God! whither is man fallen, to be more cruel than a beast to the children of his own body! What slavery is it to serve Satan, and what liberty to serve thee!

Nay, they will sacrifice not only their estates and children, but their lives and all their outward comforts, to superstition. How did the worshippers of Baal cut and lance themselves! Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that smote him, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23; so fervent he was that he chose rather in the service of false gods to be scourged, than in the service of the true God to be saved.[2]

Among the Mohammedans are a sect called the dervises,[3] whose sharp and strict penances exceed those of the papists; they live on the tops of hills, solitary, for contemplation; fast, till nature be almost decayed; have no clothes but to cover their nakedness; wear such massy fetters of iron upon their legs that they can scarce stir, and yet go as fast as they can with them many miles, to visit the sepulchres of their deluded saints. The Turks willingly lay down their lives in their wars to propagate their religion, which their prophet hath taught them must be done, *non disputando, sed pugnando*, not by disputing with, but by destroying others. The unhappy Jesuit, though his religion be a heap of formalities, as the Turks' a bundle of fooleries, is yet so zealous for it, that Campian could impudently, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth's council, affirm, that as long as there was one Jesuit left for Tyburn, they had vowed never to desist endeavours to set up their religion in this nation. Oh devout ungodliness, or ungodly devotion! how few take such pains to go to heaven, as many do to go to hell!

Alas! what sorrow doth this call for and command! that men should be so hot and fiery in will-worship, in false worship, wasting their wealth, cutting and carving their bodies as if they were made only to be their slaves, and themselves to be the tyrants over them, laying out so much cost, and exercising so much cruelty, for that which is worse than nothing, for that which will not only not profit

[1] Diodor. Sic.

[2] Verberari a dæmone mallebat quam a Deo coronari.—*Mendoz. in* 1 *Sam.* viii.

[3] Purch. Pilgrim., p. 1478.

them, but extremely and eternally prejudice them; and in the interim the easy yoke of Christ is scorned, the power of godliness slighted, which might be minded with much more mildness and mercy to their outward and inward man.

It was a good meditation of a fore-quoted author, Those that travel in long pilgrimages to the Holy Land, what a number of weary paces they measure! what a number of hard lodgings and known dangers they pass! and at last, when they are come within view of their journey's end, what a large tribute they pay at the Pisan Castle to the Turks! and when they are come thither, what see they but the bare sepulchre wherein their Saviour lay, and the earth that he trod upon, to the increase of a carnal devotion! What labour should I willingly undertake in my journey to the true land of promise, the celestial Jerusalem, where I shall see and enjoy my Saviour himself! What tribute of pain or death should I refuse to pay for my entrance, not into his sepulchre, but his palace of glory, and that not to look upon, but to possess it?

Thirdly, As many make the world their main work, and others superstition their principal occupation, so most make wickedness their chief, their constant trade and business. While sanctity is but coldly entertained, but complimented with, sin is laid in the bosom and heartily embraced; the turnings and windings that are in the sinner's way are not easily to be observed; the pains which he takes to bring forth and breed up those birds which will peck out his own eyes, can neither be fully described nor sufficiently lamented. In what haste and hurry is Absalom for a halter! what work doth lust make in Amnon to waste his body, and send his soul to endless woe! how fast doth Gehazi run after a leprosy, as if he might come too late! how sick and violent is Ahab for Naboth's vineyard! how fiercely doth Balaam ride, even without reins, after the wages of unrighteousness! how eager and earnest were Pharaoh and his Egyptians to fight against God! what a stir, what ado they make to overtake destruction, and to 'sink like lead in the midst of the mighty waters!' Joshua could stop the sun in his course, but not Achan in his covetous career. Paul, before his conversion, as one observes, followed the saints with such close persecution, and was so mad upon it, that like a tired wolf, wearied in worrying the flock, he lay panting for breath, and yet still breathed out persecution; in one journey he travelled one hundred and sixty miles—namely, from Jerusalem to Damascus—as an inquisitor for private heresy. At Musselburgh-field many of the Scots ran away so fast that they fell down dead; truly so do men by sin run

away apace from God, even to the tiring of themselves here, and tormenting themselves hereafter. They run as fast as if they feared that hell would be full before they came thither.

'The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,' Job xv. 20. A wicked man's whole course is spent in carking care, as the LXX read it. He hath many sharp throes, bitter pangs, before he can bring forth that hideous, horrible monster, sin. Some women are very long in labour, several days in pain; but a wilful, wicked man travaileth with pain all his days; he works himself weary in digging descents into hell, and labours harder at it than many do for heaven. I remember Buntingus, in his *Itinerarium totius Sacræ Scripturæ*, when he comes to the travels of Antiochus Epiphanius, that fierce enemy of God's people, first relates the tedious journeys, (in all eight thousand one hundred and fifty-three miles,) various hazards, desperate dangers and difficulties which this wicked wretch underwent to satisfy his malice, and gratify his revengeful spirit, and then concludes thus: We see that the wicked, with more sorrows, troubles, and vexations, gain eternal damnation, than the just, though they suffer grievous affliction, obtain everlasting salvation. For amongst all the patriarchs, good princes, and prophets, there is not found any that had so many long and tedious journeys as this Antiochus, who continually oppressed his mind and conscience with unprofitable vanities and wicked thoughts, and at length had a miserable and terrible end.

Though God hath few diligent servants, yet the devil hath many drudging slaves, that work hard at grinding in his mill all their days. Their calling is a trade of corruption, which they follow with diligence and constancy. 'They plough iniquity, sow wickedness, and reap the same,' Job iv. 8. Alas! what pains do they take to pollute themselves spiritually, and perish eternally! They plough iniquity. Ploughing is no easy, lazy work. We say of such works as require much pains, a man were as good go to plough all day; these sons of Belial, that will not stoop to the easy yoke of the Saviour, can submit their proud necks to the hard yoke of Satan, and follow his plough willingly. Sin is their diet, their meat and drink: 'They eat the bread of violence, and drink the wine of deceit,' Prov. iv. 17. Nay, it is their dainties, their delicates; 'Let me not eat of their dainties,' Ps. cxli. 4. These apish monkeys, who now and then act the part of Christians without a principle of Christianity, feed on spiders, on poison. Further, it is not only their nourishment in the day, but their refreshment in the night: 'They cannot sleep unless they cause some to fall,' Prov. iv. 16.

Till their stomachs are gorged and glutted with the sweetmeats of sin, and thereby their heads filled with filthy fumes and vapours arising thence, they can take no rest. They love sin above sleep; and let them but riot, they will lose their rest. The murderer riseth with the light to cut asunder the silver thread of his neighbour's life. The drunkard, that hellish good husband, can be all night drinking healths to others, whilst he leaves none to himself; how often doth his brains crow before break of day! The thief and adulterer love and long for darkness to cover and countenance their cursed deeds, Job xxiv. 14–16; Prov. vii. 9. Once more, as sin is their nourishment, their food and sleep, so it is their garment, their ornament. 'Pride compasseth them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a garment,' Ps. lxxiii. 6. A chain of pearl doth not better become their necks, nor the richest robes adorn their backs, than sin doth, in their judgments, become and suit their souls; they glory in their shame. Plato saith of Protagoras, that he boasted, whereas he had lived sixty years, he had spent forty years in corrupting youth. They brag of that which they ought to bewail.

They plot sin with their heads; 'they conceive mischief,' Ps. vii. 14. They affect sin with their hearts; 'their hearts are after their covetousness,' Ezek. xxxiii. They act with their hands what their heads forge and their hearts favour; they 'do evil with both hands earnestly,' Micah vii. 3. They work so hard till they are weary; 'Thou hast wearied thyself in the multitude of thy counsels,' Isa. xlvii. 13. Pliny saith of the scorpion, that there is not one minute wherein he doth not put forth his sting; these cannot cease from sin, 2 Pet. ii.; they do even contend which of them shall exceed in sin, as unhappy boys strive who shall go farthest in the dirt.

All the rubs which are laid in their way do rather increase their rage than hinder their riot. When God would stop the stream of their lusts by his prohibitions, laws, judgments, like waters dammed up, they swell the more, and like the possessed person, break all those cords in pieces. When Paul chides the Ephesians for their idolatry, they cry out for it with the greater vehemency. When Stephen had reproved the Jews for their cruelty, 'they were cut to the heart, and gnash upon him with their teeth,' Acts vii. 54, 57. When Ahaz was hampered in affliction, like a mad dog he bites at his chain, and 'sins yet more in his distress against the Lord.' When the sinner's tide of nature is thwarted and crossed by the winds of reproof, or some judgment, what a storm is presently raised! how doth he, like the sea, presently discover and 'foam out

his own shame.' Though God command, entreat, persuade, threaten, promise, yet all this physic doth often but move and stir, not remove nor purge away their ill-humours. Oh how deadly is that disease which no physic can cure! and how tough is that wood which no wedge can cleave! The bird will beware of the pitfall in which she hath been caught, and the beast of the snare in which he hath been taken; but brutish man, more foolish than beasts, will not be parted from sin, though he hath been sharply punished for it.

'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely,' Ps. lviii. 3–5. The serpent, when she begins to feel the charmer, clappeth one ear presently to the ground, and stoppeth the other ear with her tail, although by hearkening to the charmer, as some observe, she would be provoked to spit out her poison, and renew her age. So hot is man upon his harlot sin, that he is deaf to all that would counsel him to the contrary; he stoppeth his ear, hardeneth his heart, stiffeneth his neck against the thunders of the law, the still voice of the gospel, the motions of the Spirit, and the convictions of his own conscience. When sin calls, they run through thick and thin for haste; when the world commands, how readily do they hearken, how quickly do they hear, how faithfully do they obey! but when the blessed God crieth to them, chargeth them by his unquestionable authority, beseecheth them for their own unchangeable felicity, they, like statues of men rather than living creatures, stand still and stir not at all. Other things move swiftly to their centres; stones fall tumbling downward, sparks fly apace upward, coneys run with speed to their burrows, rivers with violence to the ocean, and yet silly man hangs off from his Maker—that neither entreaties, nor threatenings, nor the word, nor the works of God, nor hope of heaven, nor fear of hell, can quicken or hasten him to his happiness. Who would imagine that a reasonable soul should act so much against sense and reason? Where is the saint that is not shamed by the very damned? Sinners drive furiously, like Jehu, against their God, their sovereign; but saints, like Egyptians, drive heavily, though they are marching in the road to the heavenly Canaan. Ah, who presseth towards the mark for the prize of high calling? Who works so hard to be preferred to the beatifical vision, as wicked men do to be punished with eternal destruction? They sweat at sowing in the devil's field, when all

they shall reap thereby will be damnation, and thou freezest in seeking God's favour, when the fruit thereof will be everlasting salvation.

O reader, consider and mourn, that the deceitful world (who will leave their lovers in the greatest danger) should have such hot and violent wooers; that superstition should be so greedily caught at, though, like hemlock, it makes them run mad that eat it, and ends often in desperation; nay, that the loathsome monster sin—whose father is the devil, whose service is perfect slavery, whose jointure is blackness of darkness for ever—should have so many and such eager, earnest suitors; and yet godliness, whose birth is noble from heaven, whose person is lovely, the beautiful image of the blessed God, whose portion is large, no less than eternal life, should be by most wholly slighted, and at best but coldly courted. Surely this ought to be for a lamentation. Good God! whither did man go when he departed away from thee!

The ancient men wept when they saw the foundation of the second temple laid, considering how far it came short of the glory and beauty of the first, Ezra iii. 12. What cause have we then to weep floods of tears when we ponder how short man is, nay, how contrary man is to his primitive purity and perfection! Godliness was then his business, but is now his burden; sin was then loathed as his bane, but is now loved as his daily bread.

CHAPTER X.

An exhortation to make God our business in the whole course of our lives.

The second and principal use which I shall make of this doctrine shall be by way of exhortation. Ought godliness to be every one's business? then, reader, let me persuade thee in the fear of God to put this precept into practice—'Exercise thyself to godliness.' Let it be the chief trade thou drivest, the principal calling thou followest, to worship the true God in heart and life, according to his revealed will. I hope thou art satisfied in the weight of the reasons already delivered; what canst thou say why thou shouldst not presently set upon the work. Thou hast heard it is the great end of thy being and continuance in this world; that it is an employment of the greatest concernment—how it is soul-work, God-work, eternity-work; that it must of necessity be made the main

business, or otherwise all thy labour will be lost. Canst thou easily break this threefold cord. Let conscience judge between God and thee, whether such a work as this is doth not deserve all thy time and strength, thine utmost care and greatest diligence, and ten thousand times more than thou canst possibly give it. Thou hast also read how fiery and furious worldlings, formalists, sinners are for their Delilahs and minions. Oh, why art thou so slothful to 'go in and possess the good land'? Judges xviii. 3.

Themistocles seeing two cocks fight,[1] when he was going to a battle, pointed his soldiers to them, and said, 'Do you see yonder combatants, how valiantly they deal their blows, with what fury they fight! and yet they fight not for their country, nor for their gods, nor for the honour of their ancestors, nor for glory, nor liberty, nor children! What courage then, my brave countrymen, should this put into our hearts, on whose resolution all these depend, and by whose valour they subsist!' So I say to thee, reader; dost thou see yonder worldling, how he rideth, runneth, toileth, moileth, sweateth, wasteth his strength, wrongeth his body, makes a very pack-horse of it, and will scarce allow it time to eat or sleep? Dost thou see yonder superstitious person, how zealous he is for the inventions of men, laying his estate, limbs, liberty, and life at the feet of his own idol? How like one upon a fiery steed full of mettle, he rides post out of God's way, and from God's word! Nay, dost thou see yonder sinner, what time he spends, what miseries he endures, what wealth he wastes, how hard he labours to gratify his lust? And yet these work not for the blood of Christ, nor for the love of the Father, nor for the graces of the Spirit, nor for freedom from the curse of the law, the slavery of Satan, the torments of hell, nor for their souls, nor for their God, nor for fulness of joy, and the pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore. What zeal and fervency should this put into our hearts, dear friends, and what diligence and industry into our hands, when we work and trade for all these! and if we make them our business our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Exercise thyself to godliness, not to superstition. As the ivy in time eats up the very heart of the oak it groweth about, so doth formality and superstition the very heart and life of religion. Let God's laws, not thy own or others' lusts, be the rule whereby thou governest thy heart and life.

Superstition, saith an eminent divine,[2] is to true holiness, what

[1] Ælian lib. ii. Var. Hist. cap. 28.
[2] Gurnal, Christ. in comp. arm., part 2 edit. 2, p. 224.

the concubine is to the true wife—who is sure to draw the husband's love from her. This brat the devil hath long put out to nurse to the Romish church, which hath taken a great deal of pains to bring it up for him; and no wonder, when she is so well paid for its maintenance, it having brought her in so much worldly treasure and riches.

What some observe of horse-hairs, that, though lifeless, yet lying nine days under water, they turn to snakes, may pertinently be applied to superstitious ceremonies, which, though at first dead, or held at most but indifferent, yet in continuance of time have quickened, and done much mischief. There is a simplicity in the word and worship of God, which I would entreat thee to look after. 'I fear lest your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ,' 2 Cor. xi. 3, not as simplicity is opposed to wisdom, but as simplicity is opposed to mixtures; compositions do but diminish and abate the virtue of simples. The more natural and simple the wine is, the more pure it is; mixtures do but adulterate it. The more simple the worship of God is—I speak of gospel simplicity and order—the more pure it is; human inventions and mixtures may abase it, they cannot adorn it. God's altar under the law must be of earth; 'If thou lift up a tool upon it, thou hast polluted it,' Exod. xx. 24, 25. Men are apt to think, that by lifting up tools on God's altar they polish it, but God himself saith they pollute it.

When the church was in her infancy, she was dressed in the swaddling clothes of ceremonies; but since she is grown up, God hath provided her other attire. To the Jews, the Sun of righteousness was behind, and therefore the shadow of those ceremonies was before. They were in force and power; but to us Gentiles the Sun of righteousness is before, and therefore the shadow of ceremonies is behind. When Christ came, those shadows seemed to say, as the angels to Jacob, 'Let us go, for the day breaketh,' Gen. xxxii. 26; at the death of Christ the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, to acquaint us that the Jewish ceremonies must then vanish, Mat. xxvii. 51.

Reader, I would not be mistaken; I do not advise thee against that order and decency which is commanded in the worship of God, nor against active obedience to authority in things that are circumstantial, or not directly nor consequentially forbidden in Scripture, but I would counsel thee to beware, lest, like the dog in the fable, whilst thou art snapping at any shadow, thou dost not lose the substance; and withal I must tell thee, that as when the shadows grow

long, it is a sign the sun is declining, so when those shadows, those even indifferent things increase, usually the substance, the light of holiness, decreaseth.

When corn runs out into straw and chaff, those that feed on it may well be thin and lean; but when it runs into ear and kernel, thou mayest expect such as eat of it to be fat and well-favoured: when religion runs into formalities and ceremonies, her followers can never be thriving spiritually—they may starve, for all the gaudy flowers wherewith the several dishes on her table are decked and set forth; it is the power of godliness alone, which, like wholesome and substantial food, will distribute nourishment and strength to the inner man. I expect nourishment from bread, not from straw or stones, because God hath annexed his blessing to the former, not to the latter. I look for spiritual strength from divine institutions, not from human inventions, because God's promise is made to word-worship, not to will-worship. One would think the sparks of that fire wherewith Aaron's sons were consumed should fly in the faces of men, and make them afraid to offer up to the Lord what he commanded them not, Lev. x. 1, 2.

Exercise thyself to this worshipping the true God according to his revealed will; do not dally and trifle at it, be not cold and careless about it. Take heed of the worldling's political principles: 'Fair and softly goeth far. Too much of one thing is good for nothing. It is good to be religious, but not too conscientious. A little moderation would not do amiss.' These men would serve thee as ignorant mountebanks do their patients, that whilst they go about to cool the liver, lest it should set the blood in a flame, kill the stomach, and thereby necessarily destroy the body. They pretend some fear that thou mayest work too hard, even to thy hurt; when thou canst never do enough, much less too much, for thy God and thine everlasting good. I must needs tell thee that there is an impossibility of dividing thy service betwixt thy sins and thy Saviour, and of parting thy heart and work between the world and the word: 'No man can serve two masters,' Mat. vi. 24. If like a meteor thou hangest between heaven and earth, haltest between Christ and the flesh, as a hunting dog between two hares, running sometime after this, sometime after that, thou wilt be sure at last to lose both.

Those creatures under the law, which did both move in the waters, and hover up and down in the air, were unclean in God's account, Lev. xi. 10. There is a story of a bastard eagle, which hath one foot close like a goose, with which she swims in the waters

and dives for fish, and another foot open and armed with talons, with which she soareth in the air, and seizeth her prey; but she, participating of both natures, is weak in either, and at last becomes a prey to every ordinary vulture. The ambidexter in religion, who is both for the flesh and the spirit, for riches and righteousness, is all his time a servant of sin, and will at last become a prey to Satan.

Wherefore I must entreat thee, reader, to make godliness thy sole design and delight, thy main occupation and recreation. If thou find not the golden veins upon the surface, or just under the skin of the earth, do not throw off thy trade, nor cast away thy tools, but delve and dig lower; thou shalt certainly at length come to the rich treasure. The virtuous man in Greek is denominated from a word, σπουδαῖος, that signifieth industrious and diligent. Labour is the way to get and increase virtue, and the more virtuous thou art, the more laborious thou wilt be; frequent use must keep thy spiritual arms from rust.

It is a more worthy thing to abound in work, than to abound in wealth. Melanchthon spake nobly, Let others take riches, give me labour.[1] They who have been busy about much meaner studies, have yet pursued them with incredible pleasure and extraordinary pains. Endymion spent whole nights on rocks and mountains, in contemplating the motions of the stars. It is said of Chrysippus, that he was so intent on his book, that he had starved his body, had not his maid put meat into his mouth. Cicero[2] professed he would part with all he was worth, that he might but live and die among his books. Did they reckon human knowledge, that curious piece of vanity, at so high a rate, that they would trample on their possessions, take any pains to procure it, to promote it? What a price shouldst thou set upon godliness, upon divine knowledge, which is the very seed of eternal life! John xvii. 3. Shouldst not thou undervalue thy estate and strength for it? Shouldst not thou spend all thy time, employ all thy talents, and improve all thy opportunities for the furthering of it? Oh that holy Paul might be thy pattern, 'Herein I exercise[3] myself, to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and men,' Acts xxiv. 16. Here is Paul's precious cabinet, and his care to preserve it; his cabinet was his

[1] In operibus sit abundantia mea, divitiis per me licet abundet quisquis voluerit.—*Plutarch.*

[2] Cicer. Ep., lib. ix.

[3] Ἀσκῶ, *me exerceo, laboro, totus sum in hac re, ut inculpate Deo serviam, nec homines offendam.*

conscience void of offence, a treasure of inestimable value; in this cabinet were all the jewels of divine graces. His faith and love, his hope and humility, his patience and heavenly-mindedness, were glistering in it gloriously, like so many costly and sparkling diamonds; but observe Paul's care of this cabinet, 'I exercise myself to keep a conscience void of offence;' Paul knew many subtle thieves were abroad, and therefore he must make it his business to keep his pearls, or otherwise they would be stolen from him. He knew if he were robbed he were ruined; nay, if but a flaw were made in the jewel of his conscience, it would be of exceeding ill consequence to him, therefore he did 'exercise himself to keep a conscience void of offence.'

Again, exercise thyself to godliness; make it thy business in the whole course of thy life, nay, in every passage of thy conversation. As the blood runs through the whole body, and every vein of the body, so godliness must run through our whole conversation, and every particular action of it. Godliness must be like the sun, (though its situation be in heaven, and that the main place of its residence,) enlighten and warm the whole body of the air, and all the earth by its influence, shine on all thy natural, civil, and spiritual works, 'nothing must be hid from the heat thereof.' Reader, observe the command, 'Be ye holy in all manner of conversation,' 1 Pet. i. 15.

The Greek word *ἀναστροφὴ*, and the Latin word *conversatio*, for conversation, come of a verb that signifieth to turn; to note, that which way soever a Christian turneth himself he must be holy; he must be holy in his closet, alone, holy among company, holy at home, holy abroad, holy in his shop, holy among his sheep, holy in the church, holy in his chamber, holy at his table, holy in his travels, holy in prosperity, holy in adversity, holy in every relation and in every condition, 'in all manner of conversation.' As oil is laid over all colours to make them durable, so godliness must be laid on every part and practice of our conversation, and thereby they will be permanent to our comfort, and run parallel with the line of eternity. We lay gold, because excellent, on all sorts of metals; godliness, which is more precious than fine gold, must be laid on our naturals, morals, intellectuals; all of them must have their virtue and value from it. The truth is, they all, like ciphers, stand for nothing, unless this figure be joined with them, and put before them.

Believers are commanded to be 'holy men,' Exod. xxii. *ult.* In the original it is *men of holiness;* and 'ye shall be men of holiness

unto me'—that is, all over holy. As Christ is called 'a man of sorrows,' because his whole man, body and soul, was steeped in tears, and his whole time, from the womb to the tomb, was spent in sorrows and sufferings, full of tribulations; and as Antichrist is called a 'man of sin' because he is, as Beza observes well, *merum scelus*—mere sin, nothing but sin, Isa. liii. 3; 2 Thes. ii. 3; so the children of God should be men of holiness, mere holiness, made up of holiness, nothing but holiness. Every part of them should be holy, and every deed done by them should be holy. Holiness in their hearts should, as the lungs in the body, be in continual motion; and holiness in their life must run through all their works, as the woof through the whole web.

The Jews had their daily, weekly, monthly, yearly addresses unto God, to teach us that we must be always trading heavenward; that there must be an unwearied commerce, an uninterrupted intercourse, betwixt God and our souls. Saints' lives are therefore compared to a walk, and called a 'walking with God,' or a 'walking before God.' They must still walk as in company with him, and tread every step as under his eye, Gen. v. 22, and xvii. 1. The planets, because of their wandering nature, are sometimes nearer to, sometimes farther from the earth, yet always within the zodiac, the highway of the sun. So the Christian, though he be sometimes stooping to the earth in his particular calling, sometimes mounting up to heaven in the immediate worship of God, yet he must always be in the path of godliness—the highway of the Sun of righteousness: 'Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long,' saith Solomon, Prov. xxiii. 17. Whether a Christian be eating or drinking, or buying or selling, or ploughing or sowing, or riding or walking, whatever he be doing, or wherever he be going, he must be always in the fear of the Lord. Godliness must be his guide, his measure, and his end; as the salt, it must be sprinkled on every dish to make it savoury. Thy life, O Christian, must be so led that it may be a continued serving of God.

The precept is full, (though if a true Christian, thou wilt esteem it a privilege,) that whatsoever thou dost, thou art to 'do all to the glory of God,' 1 Cor. x. 31. God must be the 'Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end,' of all thy actions. Thy duty is to 'pass the whole time of thy sojourning here in fear,' 1 Pet. i. 17. Every moment must be devoted to God; and as all seasons, so all actions, must be sacred. There is a prophecy that in Jerusalem, 'In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness to the Lord, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the

altar; yea, every pot in Judah and Jerusalem shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts,' Zech. xiv. 20, 21. Mark, the same inscription is to be upon the bells of horses, and on every pot, which was on the high priest's mitre, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, to teach us, that everything, though but of common use, should be sanctified to God's service—that every ordinary enterprise, saith Calvin, should be a sacrifice.[1]

In the prosecution of this exhortation, I shall—

First, Speak to the nature of this duty, and manner; how a Christian must exercise himself to godliness in the whole course of his life, and in every part thereof.

Secondly, I shall lay down some means for the accomplishing this duty.

Thirdly, I shall annex some motives to encourage the reader in this holy trade and calling.

First, As to the manner how a saint may, in every passage of his life, follow this trade. I shall divide my discourse into these several heads.

1. How a man may make godliness his business in religious actions, or the worship of God in general, as also in his carriage, in hearing or reading, in prayer, at the Lord's Supper, and on the Lord's day in particular.

2. How a Christian may make religion his business in his natural actions, of eating, drinking, sleeping, and clothing.

3. In his recreations.

4. In his particular vocation or calling.

5. In reference to his relations and family.

6. In his dealings with all men.

7. In all conditions, whether of prosperity or adversity.

8. In all companies, whether good or bad.

9. In solitariness, or when he is alone.

10. On a week-day, from morning to night.

11. In his visiting the sick.

12. Upon a dying bed.

[1] Ut quicquid aggrediantur homines sit sacrificium.—*Calv. in loc.*

CHAPTER XI.

How a Christian may make religion his business in spiritual performances and religious actions.

First, Make godliness thy business in religious duties.

I shall put that first in order which is first in nature and excellency; and truly, friend, thy special care must be here; thy greatest diligence will be little enough when thou comest solemnly into God's presence. Cleanly men wash their hands and brush their clothes every day, but when they are to dine with a king they will wash and scour their hands; they will brush their clothes over and over again, that their hands may be, if possible, clean from the least dirt, and their garments from the least dust. The true Christian is, in all company, and in the whole course of his life, every day careful to keep his soul clean and his conscience clear—nay, to increase his godliness; but when he draweth nigh to God, then he hath more special care and extraordinary caution. Though tradesmen are, all the year long, doing somewhat at their callings, either casting up their accounts, or gathering in their debts, or amending something in their commodities which are amiss, and therefore have no time for idleness; yet at some times of the year they are full of trading; their shops are crowded with customers; they are all the week either sending out or taking in wares. Now this time calls for their greatest diligence and watchfulness.

The time of sacred duty is a Christian's market-day, wherein he is much employed, and therefore it calls for his greatest diligence. He that leaves his shop, or loiters in it at such a time, must expect that his shop will quickly leave him. The husbandman hath his seasons to plough and sow in, which if he be heedless and careless about, that either his seed be smutty or his servant slothful, he can look for but a mean and poor harvest. The hours of praying, and reading, and hearing, are the saints' opportunities and seasons of grace. If he be not, then, careful and conscientious to 'plough up the fallow-ground of his heart,' and to 'sow to the Spirit,' his return will be very inconsiderable; he will reap but a thin crop. But truly, friend, if thou hast no respect to thy soul's good, God hath to his own glory; and though he stoop to thee in giving thee leave to seek his face and hear his voice, yet he will not be slighted by thee. He is a glorious and jealous Majesty, and esteemeth it a disparagement to him for any to wait upon him without their best

attire. Though Uzzah be dead, yet he speaketh to thee to take heed how thou touchest the ark.

A prince may be pleased, if his kitchen be but indifferent neat and handsome; but he looks that in his parlour, where he gives entertainment to his friend, all things should be in print. Where God's special walk is amongst his candlesticks, and amidst his myrtle-trees, there godliness must be our special work. 'Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever,' Ps. xciii. *ult.* Godliness doth always suit the back of a saint; this gracious garment is a glorious ornament to him, whatever he is doing, or wherever he is going; but the apparel doth become him best in his approaches to the Holy God. No hangings, no tapestry becomes God's house so well as holiness; and no place is so proper as the house of God for this costly, comely furniture.

God is more honoured or dishonoured in our religious actions, than in all the actions of our lives; in them we do directly and immediately pretend his honour and service; and therefore if we do not walk in them watchfully, and intend them seriously, the greater is our sin. For a trespass committed against holy things, the Jews were to bring a ram, to be valued by the shekel of the sanctuary; for a trespass against their brethren a ram was required, but no such valuation expressed; whence Origen infers, *Aliud est peccare in sanctis, aliud extra sancta:* It is one thing to sin in holy things, another thing to sin beside them. And he urgeth that place in Samuel, 1 Sam. ii. 25, 'If a man sin against another man, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?' Lev. v. 15, and vi. 6. When men are some way off in a king's eye they will be comely in their carriage; but when they come into his presence-chamber to speak with him they will be most careful. Because saints are always in God's sight, their constant deportment must be pious and seemly. 'I have kept thy precepts, for all my ways are before thee,' Ps. cxix. 168. But because the ordinances of God are the very face of God, and they who worship him therein do solemnly appear before him, therefore at such seasons they are bound to be most holy and serious, Exod. xxiii. 17; Ps. xlii. 2. The saying of the sage orator[1] hath some weight, Worship the gods at all times, especially in public—that is, in their sacrifices. God is very curious how men carry themselves in his courts, and commandeth thee, reader, to be eminently pious when thou appearest in his presence. Do but observe under the law how choice he was about all

[1] Isocrat ad. Demos.

things relating to his worship: the tabernacle must be made of the best wood, the purest gold, the finest linen, and every part and pin of it done exactly according to God's own precept; the persons called to set it up must be rarely gifted, and singularly endowed for that very purpose. He that offereth sacrifice must be without blemish, 'For whatsoever man he be that hath any blemish, he shall not approach. A blind man, or a lame man, or he that hath anything superfluous, or a flat nose, or he that is broken-faced, or broken-handed, or crooked-backed, or a dwarf, or that hath any blemish in his eye, or the scurvy, or is scabbed. No man that hath any blemish of the sons of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord, made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God,' Lev. xxi. 17–20. So the sacrifice also must be perfect, without spot. If it were 'blind, or broken, or maimed, had a wen, the scurvy, or were scabbed,' Lev. xxii. 19, 22, 24, it must not be offered; it must be 'a male without blemish, of the best of the flocks;' nay, the best of these beasts, the fat, even all the fat, which covereth the inwards, Lev. iii. 3. And what is the substance of all these shadows, but this, that God will be served by holy men in the purest, holiest manner; that we must be very exact, both as to our persons and performances, when we are in his presence; that he expects the best of living sacrifices, the hearts and spirits of men; nay, the best of the best, all the heart, and all the soul, and all the strength, Prov. xxiii.; John iv. 24; Mat. xxii. 37. Oh how much is an ordinary, slight performance, below and unsuitable to so great and glorious a Prince! Religion is as tender a thing as the apple of thine eye, by playing with the eye it may be put out, by dallying with duties thou mayest spoil all.

If the Egyptians did reverence Mercurius Trismegistus so much, that they did forbear, out of respect to him, to pronounce his name rashly, what respect shouldst thou bear to ordinances, which are the name of God, Exod. xx. 24. How fearful shouldst thou be of taking the name of God in vain.

The blind heathen were choice and devout in the service of dumb idols; they served them in white, an emblem of purity; they thought nothing too good for those false gods, for whom the worst was not bad enough. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, enacted, that none should serve the gods *obiter*, or by the by, that their sacrifices should be all select and chosen, and that the sacrificers should purify themselves some days beforehand. Lycurgus had made a law, that no man should be at any great charge in a sacrifice, lest

he should grow weary of divine service: yet when Phidias, the famous carver, advised the Athenians to make the statue of Minerva of marble rather than ivory—1. Because it was more durable, this reason was approved; 2. Because less chargeable: at the mention hereof, with much rage and wrath, they commanded him silence. They had a higher respect for those lies and falsehoods than many have for the true God. When they were going to offer sacrifice their priest cried, *Τὶς τῇδε*, Who is here? Those present answered, *Πολλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ*, Many and good.[1] Were they so choice and wary in the service of their dunghill deities; and wilt not thou, friend, be circumspect and conscientious in the service of the living God? Did they think nothing costly enough for inanimate creatures, and wilt thou offer to the Lord thy God that which cost thee nothing? Can thy box of precious ointment, though it be worth never so much, be bestowed better than on thy dearest Saviour? And can thy care and caution, thy love and labour, be employed better than in his service? Or dost thou think that the false gods were more affected with their dishonour, or more to be feared in their displeasure, than the living, true God? Dost thou not know that he 'will be sanctified in them that draw nigh to him'? Lev. x. 3. Great persons are impatient of contempts and affronts, especially when they are offered to them in their own houses; God will sooner overlook thy forgetfulness of him in thy trade or travels than in his tabernacle. When thou drawest nigh to him, there he will be sanctified, either in thee or upon thee. If thou refuse to give him glory in his service, believe it, he will get himself glory by thy suffering. His worship is his face, and look for his fury, if thou darest him to his face.

The waters of the sanctuary are like the waters given to a suspected wife: if she were innocent, it witnessed her honesty, made her fruitful if barren, and did her good; but if she were guilty, swelled her belly, rotted her bowels, and did her hurt. If thou make godliness thy business in the ordinances of God, thou mayest get much spiritual good, thou mayest meet Christ in them, receive grace through them, and thrive as the babe by the breasts in health and strength; but if thou, like the horse in the mill, only goest thy round in religious duties, never minding the true end of them, nor thy carriage in them, thy prayer will be an abomination, the word 'a savour of death unto death,' and the very sacrament a seal of thy damnation. It doth therefore nearly concern thee to hearken to that counsel which I shall give thee from the word, to

[1] Eras. Præf. in Adag.

prevent thy miscarriage in the duties of God's worship: for preparation to duties, I shall speak when I come to treat of sanctifying the Lord's day.

First, Be heedful and watchful over thyself when thou art about religious duties. Heedless service is fruitless service; what measure of care we give God in duties, the same measure of comfort we may expect from duties. Eccles. v. 1, 'Keep thy feet when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools.' Thine heart, like Dinah, is apt to wander abroad, especially from the way and worship of God; it behoves thee then to have a strict hand over it, if thou wouldst keep it at home: 'Observe, consider thy feet,' so the word signifieth.

The feet of the harlot abide not within her house, neither will thy affections easily within the house of God; doth not experience tell thee that they love to be gadding, and therefore require a strong and vigilant guard? Parents set their children before them at church, and have their eyes much upon them, because otherwise they will be toying and playing; truly so will thy heart, if thine eye be not on it. Alas, thy heart in duty is like one that looks through an optic glass on some small object, with a palsy hand, it is long before he can discern it, and as soon as he hath found it, so unsteady is his hand that he hath lost it again; therefore it behoves thee to keep it diligently, and to watch it narrowly; there is a bottomless depth of deceit in thine heart—how unwilling is it to a duty! how much wandering in a duty! how soon weary of a duty! 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who knoweth it?' Jer. xvii. 11. Take notice of the centre of the poison, the *heart* is deceitful; a deceitful hand is nothing so dangerous as a deceitful heart; when poison gets to the very seat of life, in what danger is a soul of death! Here is also the measure of the pollution. The heart is deceitful *above all things*, the best part is unspeakably poisoned. The prophet's expression hath a threefold gradation. First, There is deceit in man's heart, it is a word used of ways, Isa. xl. 5, which are full of windings and turnings, and therefore are hard to be found; so is man's heart full of nooks and corners, slights and craft, and so doth easily supplant us; it hath not only weakness and proneness to be deceived by others, but also an activeness and aptness to deceive itself. Secondly, there is the degree of its deceit, and indeed it is beyond all degrees. 'The heart is deceitful above all things;' no creature so sly and subtle as man's heart, nothing in this world can equal

it for tricks and wiles: nay, as this deceit of man's heart is so great that none can match it, so also is it so deep that none can find it, none can fathom it, 'Who can know it?' The largest, the longest line of man's understanding can never search to the bottom of this sea. Thirdly, Here is the danger of it, 'the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' It is not deceitful in such a degree, so much through weakness as through wilfulness, it is desperately carried towards deadly courses. It devotes itself wholly to deceive and destroy. How many pretences will it have to make thee to omit holy performances! if thou overcome them, how subtle will it be to make thee heedless and heartless in the service of God! It will fill thee with cares and thoughts of the world, purposely to choke the good seed of the word; if at any time thou wind it up to any seriousness in an ordinance, how quickly and how swiftly, like a clock or a jack, doth it run down. Surely, reader, the master that hath such a cozening servant, must look narrowly to him, if he would not be cheated by him. If thou dost not watch at the altar, the birds will devour thę sacrifice.

Those that were before the throne day and night were full of eyes, behind and before, and within, Rev. iv. 6 and 8. Extraordinary heed is necessary when we come into God's house. We had need to have our eyes about us, when we come to deal immediately with him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. The Athenians in time of their sacrifice, had a monitor to bid them be serious, calling on them, *Hoc agite*, Mind the work ye are about. (*Plut.*) Cyprian observeth, that in the primitive times the deacon often cried out to the people, *Sursum corda*, Lift up your hearts: and the pastor stirred them up with *Oremus, attendamus*, Let us pray, let us attend; commanding their greatest attention when they were about religious actions.

Eutychus was drowsy while he was hearing, which had like to have cost him his life; God will not be slighted when he is speaking to the children of men. Christ commandeth thee to 'take heed how thou hearest,' Luke viii. 18. The heart is needful in hearing more than the ears. We read of those that 'had ears and yet heard not,'[1] Isa. vi. 9, 10; Mat. xiii. 13. It is one thing to hear, and another thing to heed a sermon. 'Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith to the churches,' Rev. ii. When the word passeth through both ears, as waters through a leaking vessel, no wonder if it be unprofitable. Lest it should do so, 'let us give

[1] Audientes corporis sensu, non cordis assensu.—*Aug.*

the more diligent heed,' saith the apostle, Heb. ii. 1. If men be told of the dreadful end of sin, and the great danger of their precious souls, and they mind it not, will they ever strive to prevent it? Our proficiency by the word depends not a little upon our earnest attention to the word, Luke xix. 48. It is said there, 'the people were attentive to hear him.' They hanged on Christ as if their ears and minds had been tied to his tongue, or as eagerly as the little bird on the dam's bill for corn.

In prayer also be heedful, 'watch unto prayer,' Mark xiii. 33. Nehemiah, when building, did work and watch, watch and work, because of his enemies; when thou art at prayer, temptations without will be waiting, corruptions within will be working; and therefore it is requisite for thee to be watching.

Those that perform their duties, as papists say their *paternosters*, and musicians play their lessons, with their fingers, when their minds are busied about other things, will make but harsh and displeasing music in God's ears. 'O God,' saith the psalmist, 'thou art terrible out of thy holy places,' Ps. lxviii. 35. The sanctuary or place of worship was divided into three parts, thence called 'thy holy places;' now out of them God was comfortable to his watchful and diligent servants, but terrible to the slothful and negligent. He is terrible not only in the high places of the field, but also in the holy places of the faithful.

How canst thou expect that God should heed thy prayers, when thou dost not heed them thyself; wouldst thou give alms to a beggar that by his carriage and language should slight both thee and thy bounty? If a condemned malefactor were suing to a prince for his life, and in the midst of his entreaties should see a moth or a fly, and leave his suit and follow after that, would this wretch deserve a pardon? And is it not as unreasonable that God should grant thy requests, if thou wilfully follow those foolish objects which thy heart, or the devil offer to thee in the midst of thy prayers; monstrous compositions, wherein is the face and voice of a man, the heart and feet of a beast, must needs be odious to God; Oh bind thine heart to its good behaviour, when thou goest into God's house. Men put locks and fetters on wild horses, whom no enclosure can keep in. This watching the heart in duties will fasten and tie it, as with cords, to the altar.

Secondly, Act grace in duties. The acting of grace in a duty is the grace of a duty. The Christian must attend on the means of grace, in a gracious manner; the manner of performing duties is the most spiritual part of them, and therefore must most of all be

minded. God made a breach on them who sought him, 'not after the due order,'[1] 1 Chron. xv. 13. If the matter of thy performance be according to the word, and thou wilfully fail in the manner, thou wilt, instead of a blessing, meet with a blow. God had sacrifices from the Jews of his own appointment for the matter, and yet they were unsavoury to him, Isa. i. 13–15. It is the manner which makes or mars every action, that is the form which specificates all our devotion; grace is God's own image, abundantly amiable in his eye, and that must be stamped on all our coin of duties, or they will never be current with heaven. Kings suffer no coin to go in their dominions, but what hath their own stamp. Tamerlane would not own a pot of gold which his soldier found and brought him, because it wanted his father's impression. Christ will own no performances unless they have his Father's picture, somewhat of his image on them.

Indeed, the Christian hath no natural power for these spiritual performances, but God gives him his Spirit for this purpose, that he might be enabled to do sacred duties, with suitable graces; 'we know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities,' Rom. viii. 26. Man is impotent, but the Spirit is an able assistant, 'helpeth our infirmities,' *συναντιλαμβάνεται*. The word is either an allusion to a nurse, which helps her weak little child to go, so the Spirit affords his hand and helps us to go to God in duties; or, as the composition of the word imports, it is an allusion to those who lift at a weighty piece of timber, too heavy for one alone, one man tugs and pulls hard, but he cannot wag it, till one stronger than he comes and helps him, then he bears it away cheerfully; so the Christian, he pulls and hales at his own heavy heart in a duty, to perform the duty aright, and yet makes nothing of it till the Spirit comes and helps him, and then he goes along comfortably through the duty. As to preaching there is required external mission, so to every prayer and performance there are required internal motions; therefore we find the 'Spirit of grace and supplication' joined together, Zech. xii. 10. Samson when his lock was cut off, became like another man; the Christian, when the Spirit withdraweth, that grace be not acted, he performeth duties like a carnal man. It is the breath of the Spirit of God in a duty, which is so sweet and savoury to God; gifts may do somewhat as to the outward part of a duty, as a carver may make an image with the external lineaments of a man, but unless grace

[1] Non tantum considerandum est id quod agimus, sed etiam quibus circumstantiis. —*Cajet. in Thom.* 1 *a*, *quest.* 9.

and spiritual life be in it, it is but the counterfeit, the resemblance of a true duty.

The two special graces, which I shall speak of, to be acted in religious exercises, are fear and faith; upon these two feet David walked into God's house. 'I will go into thine house, in the multitude of thy mercies,' there was his faith; 'and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy temple,' Ps. v. 6, here is his fear. The Christian, like a net, must have both the lead of a holy fear, and the cork of a lively faith, if he would catch anything out of the waters of the sanctuary: if the cork of faith was without the lead of fear, the net would lie too high; if the lead of fear were without the cork of faith, the net of the soul would fall too low, and so nothing would be caught; but both together lay in the likest place for a good draught.

1. Fear and awful apprehensions of God's infinite majesty is requisite in our religious actions: this must be the handmaid to wait upon the mistress of the soul in all its addresses to the King of heaven, 'Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling,' Ps. ii. 11. God alloweth an humble familiarity in the walks of obedience, yet he will always have the children of men to know their distance. And though this habit of fear must be ever in our hearts, as fire was constantly on the altar, yet he expects that it should be blown up and flame out at the time of offering sacrifice. Our greatest reverence is then most needful, when we approach the great God in his ordinances.[1] 'God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and had in reverence of all them that are round about him,' Ps. lxxxix. 7.

When God intended to give the law to Israel, the Jews must sanctify themselves three days beforehand, Exod. xix. 11, 12, 14; and when God came on the third day to deliver his pleasure to the people, with what pomp and terror was proclamation made! He descends in his royal robes, with a noble retinue of saints and angels, and with the dreadful ensigns of his power, majesty, and jealousy. Deut. xxxiii. 2, 'The Lord came from Sinai, and rose from Seir, he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousand of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.' Exod. xix. 16, 18, 'Then were there thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And mount Sinai was altogether in a smoke,

[1] Quod non metuitur contemnitur, et quod contemnitur non colitur.—*Lact. de ira Dei*, lib. viii.

because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly;' and why is all this? Why doth the mighty possessor of heaven and earth appear at that time in such state and royalty and magnificence, with such a train of heavenly courtiers, with such thundering volleys of shot, with the mountain smoking under him, and trumpets sounding before him, but to assure us that he is not so contemptible, as to be slighted by any; that he is not impotent, but able to revenge himself on all that affront him; nay, to teach us that he will be feared and reverenced in all them that draw nigh to him? Therefore he will make even Moses, whom he knew face to face, at such a time exceedingly to quake and fear, Heb. xii. 21.

Civil or natural difference amongst us here below commandeth proportionable reverence, the subject must fear his sovereign, 1 Pet. ii. 17. The servant must obey his master with fear and trembling, Eph. vi. 5, the wife must see that she reverence her husband, Eph. v. *ult.* If there be such reverence due from one creature to another, when they were all made of the same coarse earthly mould, and must all be buried in the bowels of their common mother; when there is no essential, but only an extrinsecal difference between them; what reverence is due from poor dust and ashes to 'the God of the spirits of all flesh'? the King of kings, and Lord of lords, between whom and his creatures there is an infinite distance?[1]

It behoveth us, said Bernard, to enter into the celestial court, at prayer time, where the King of heaven sits on his starry, stately throne, environed with an innumerable company of glorious angels and crowned saints, with great reverence and fear. Ah, with what humility should a poisonous, polluted toad, creep and crawl out of a ditch into the presence of so glorious and dreadful a Majesty! The holy servants of God were anciently called *Nephalim*, from *nephal* to fall down, *prostrates*, or *fallers*, because in the worship of God they usually fell on the earth.

The elders of Israel trembled at the coming of Samuel, 1 Sam. xvi. 9, and shall not we tremble when the great God cometh to us in his ordinances?

Every relation in which men stand to God calls for awfulness and dread of him. 'If I be a father, where is mine honour? if I

[1] The worship of God is called, λατρεία, *à partic.* λὰ *et* τρέμειν, *valde pavere;* προσκυνέω quod est more canis ad pedes alicujus tanquam domini totum sese prosternere, subjectionis gratia.—*Zanch.*

be your master, where is my fear?' Mal. i. 6, but especially in the saints' approaches to him; they must stand in awe of him. When God appeared to Jacob at Bethel, where he saw nothing but visions of love, he crieth out, 'This is none other but the house of God; how dreadful is this place!' Gen. xxviii. 17.

The great Turk, when he goeth into his temple, layeth aside all his state, and hath none to attend him but a professor of the law.

Therefore, reader, be persuaded to 'fear that glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God,' Deut. xxviii. 58. That name which is the greatest prop of thine affiance, commandeth thy fear and reverence.

When thou hearest, in the fear of God give audience to his word, Acts xiii. 16. Poor peasants must be trembling when this prince is speaking. With meekness receive that word which will damn or save thy soul. Alas! with what fear should a condemned prisoner attend to his king, when every word he speaks is life or death! It becomes the greatest persons to be awful in God's presence. Constantine the Great, when hearing a sermon, would start out of his chair of state, being ravished with the word, and stand up for a long time;[1] and being minded by his courtiers that such a posture was unbecoming his high place, he would not hearken to them. Eglon, though a fat unwieldy man, as soon as Ehud told him that he had a message from God to him, rose up to hear it, Judges iii. 20. Abraham, who had the honour and favour to be God's friend, yet when God spake to him, fell on his face, Gen. xvii. 3. Moses, though high in the heart of God, yet is humble when he hears from God; he boweth his head towards the earth, and worships, Exod. xxxiv. 8.

When thou prayest, put up thy petitions to him with awful apprehensions of him. The vulg. Lat. read that Ps. lxxxiv. 11, *abjectus in domo Dei mei*, to be cast upon the earth, to lie prostrate in the house of God. The eastern Christians, when they called on God, threw themselves on the ground. Luther prayed with confidence as to a father; but with reverence as to a God. Remember when thou takest upon thee to speak unto the Lord, yet thou art but dust and ashes, Gen. xviii. 27. Thou art at best but a beggar, and a proud heart will not suit a beggar's purse. 'The poor must use entreaties,' Prov. xviii. 23. The twenty-four elders fell on their faces and worshipped, Rev. iv. 16. So did Jesus Christ himself in prayer, Mat. xxvi. 30. 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let

[1] Euseb. de vit. Constant., lib. iii. cap. 17.

us kneel before the Lord our maker,' Ps. xcv. 6. The elephant, that could not bow nor kneel, was no fit beast for a sacrifice.

Go to the sacrament, that representation of Christ's suffering, as the disciples went from his sepulchre, 'with fear and great joy,' Mat. xxviii. 8. The Fathers call it *mysterium tremendum;* the nearer we draw to God in any ordinance, the greater must be our reverence. In a sermon we draw nigh to him, as pupils to their tutor; in prayer, as children to their father; but at a sacrament we talk with God face to face, we sup with him, and he with us. If angels veil their faces in his presence, much more cause have we to serve him with fear and trembling in every ordinance. In a word, 'Let us have grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire,' Heb. xii. 28, 29. Mark, the way to serve God acceptably is to serve him reverently. As the quaver addeth a grace to the music, and makes it more acceptable to us, so a holy trembling graceth our performances, and makes them more acceptable to God.

2. Perform religious duties with faith as well as fear; fear will keep the heart awful, and faith will make it cheerful in the service of God: 'Let us draw nigh to God with full assurance of faith,' Heb. x. 22. In ordinances man draweth nigh to God, but if he would do it with acceptance he must do it with affiance, with faith: 'By faith Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain,' Heb. xi. 4. Faith doth instrumentally justify both our persons and performances, because it looks up to, and lays hold on Christ, who justifieth both meritoriously. God is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Now there are many sins in our best services; we must therefore carry all our sacrifices (as the Israelites did, Exod. xxviii. 38) to our high priest, who will take away the iniquity of our holy things, and procure their acceptance with the Lord: 'He shall purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, then shall the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord,' Mal. iii. 2–4. It is a prophecy of Christ. He shall purge away the dross from our duties, and then they shall be pleasing to God.

It was a sacred law among the Molossians, that whosoever came to the king with his son in his arms should be pardoned, whatsoever offence he were guilty of. The Athenian general, therefore, when banished his country, fled to Admetus, king of the Molossians, his deadly enemy, and prostrated himself before him with his son in his arms, and found favour. God and man are enemies; there is no appearing before this dreadful King without his Son in our arms,

and with him there is no fear of a repulse: 'In him we have boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him,' Eph. iii. 12. As God and man are angry, Christ is *medium reconciliationis*—he makes them friends; as God and man are reconciled, Christ is *medium communionis*—he is the means of their fruition of each other. Therefore, reader, whatever thou dost, whether thou prayest, or hearest, or singest, or readest, 'do all in the name of Christ,' Col. iii. 17. Consider, thy admission into God's presence is by Christ: 'No man cometh to the Father but by the Son,' John xiv. 6; 'Through him we have access unto the Father,' Eph. ii. 18. It is his blood which hath purchased thee this gracious privilege. He alone hath turned the seat of justice into a throne of grace. When thou approachest God, he would be a fire to consume thee, not a Father to embrace thee, were it not for his Son. Consider also, thy assistance in duties is from Christ: 'Without him thou canst do nothing,' John xv. 3. Oh how dull and dead is thy heart in the most solemn duty, unless this Lord of life quicken it. Though thou hast a real principle of spiritual life, yet unless Christ draw thee, give thee quickening and inciting grace, thou canst not run after him in a duty.

Further, Thine acceptance in the ordinances of God is through Christ. Oh how unsavoury would thy best duties be, were it not for the odours of his most sweet sacrifice! The golden censer and the incense under the law typified that all our performances must be perfumed, and presented by Christ, before they can be accepted with God. The smoke of the incense must ascend with the saints' prayers before they can be pleasing. The incense (which signified the merits of Christ) is the pillar of smoke in which the believer's performances mount up to heaven, Rev. viii. 3, 4. No wonder that David begged so hard, 'Let my prayers come before thee like incense.' The priests, when they went into the tabernacle to sacrifice, were commanded to put off their own, and to put on the holy garments provided for them, Exod. xxviii. 43, intimating that none must approach God in the rags of their own, but in the robes of Christ's righteousness. The ark, which was a special type of Christ, (without of shittim-wood, speaking his humanity, within of wrought gold, typifying his deity,) did signify thus much to us; it covered the two tables, so Christ the law; there God gave his precious answers, and was propitious to his people; so God accepteth the persons and prayers of men in Christ, Eph. i. 6. If the patriarchs were welcome to Pharaoh, it was for Joseph's sake; and if the people of God are welcome at any time to him, it is for Jesus' sake.

Faith in Christ is the eye which ravisheth the heart of God: 'Thou hast stolen away mine heart with one of thine eyes,' Cant. iv. Of all the virgin graces none find such favour in his sight. This, this is the Esther on whose head he sets the crown; when she appears before him, though it be contrary to the law of works, he constantly holds out the golden sceptre of grace: he is so delighted with her beauty, so ravished with her comeliness, that he granteth her request, be it to the half or whole of his kingdom. Therefore, reader, when thou goest to God, be sure to take Christ along with thee, as ever thou wouldst speed. Let thy prayers and petitions be in his name, with an eye to his promise, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, I will do it,' John xiv. 13. Let thy praises and thanksgivings be in his name, according to his precept, 'Giving thanks always, and in all things, unto God and our Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Eph. v. 20. To be short, 'As a holy priest offer up all thy spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'

Thirdly, If thou wouldst make religion thy business in holy duties, perform them to give God glory by them, and to receive grace through them. Ordinances must be used both as a testimony of our subjection to God, and as the way of communion with God. God is present in his ordinances. 1. In majesty and beauty, and in that respect our end in them must be to give him glory. 2. In communication and bounty, and in that respect our end in them must be to receive grace from him, Ps. xxvii. 4; Rev. ii. 3, 6; Exod. xx. 24. God's eye is very much on our ends in duties; he takes notice when he is neglected, and self exalted: 'When ye fasted and mourned, even these seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?' Zech. vii. 6, 7. God seeth when self-credit or self-profit is the end of a performance, Mat. vi. 1, 2; Hosea vii. 14. He weigheth all our actions by our aims. Now, as duties are considerable in a twofold respect, so a Christian must have in them a twofold end.

1. Duties are considerable, as services, in relation to the command; and so a Christian must mind them, that he may testify his obedience to God, and his dependence on him; 'Thou hast commanded me to keep thy precepts diligently; O that my ways were directed to keep thy commandments! Ps. cxix. 5, 6.

'Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men; rejoicing evermore; pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God concerning

you,' 1 Thes. v. 14–18. God required the Israelites to bring a sheaf in a ghomer, about a pottle, for all their increase of the fruits of the earth, Lev. xxiii. 10, whereby they acknowledged that they receive all from him. Though man be unable to satisfy God's justice by all his devotion, yet God will be owned and acknowledged in holy duties. Copy-holders, though they have the profits of their houses and lands to themselves, yet pay some small quit-rent, and at certain times do suit and service to the lord of their manor, acknowledging thereby that the fee-simple is his, and they enjoy them through his favour. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' He is the mighty possessor of heaven and earth; and though he gives the earth by leases for lives, as it were, and copies to the children of men, yet the fee-simple and original right is still in himself, and he hath appointed seasons daily and weekly for duties, wherein Christians should acknowledge that they hold all of him, and enjoy all through his grace and good-will.

The worshipping of God in his ordinances is the homage which, as creatures, we owe to our Maker, and as Christians we owe to our Redeemer. God alloweth us the comfort of our mercies, but he reserveth to himself the credit of our mercies, and hath appointed the hours of prayer to be the set times for the payment of this small quit-rent (infinitely inferior to our engagements) to his sacred Majesty.

Truly, reader, this end must be minded in thine attendance on the means of grace—namely, to give God glory by acknowledging his sovereignty over thee and bounty to thee, or else when thou bendest the bow of thine heart, and shootest thy spiritual arrows, thou wilt never hit the mark.

2. Duties are considerable as means in relation to the promise; and so they are channels cut out by Christ to convey grace into the hearts of men; therefore thine end in this respect must be to derive grace from the God of all grace through the means of grace. The place of ordinances is called by some the door of heaven, because there Christ gives his alms, his dole. Others call it the celestial exchange between God and his people: God doth there exchange mercies for duties, and they exchange glory for grace. At the tabernacle, saith God, 'I will meet with the children of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory; and I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God,' Exod. xxix. 43, 45. When God comes to his house he never comes empty-handed. If Paul comes 'with the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ,' with what clusters of blessings is the true Vine laden! with what

a train of graces and comforts is this great King attended! 'I will meet with the children of Israel there.' When Jacob met Joseph, they kissed and wept, Gen. xlvi. 29; but when God meets the believer, they have a merrier meeting; they kiss and rejoice.

'And I will dwell among them.' Who can imagine the house which God keeps where he dwells—the dainties, the delicates which he provides for his friends and family! Great princes have great provision in their courts, answerable to their quality; but what provision doth the great God make! surely answerable to his infinite majesty!

The table in the tabernacle was furnished with so many loaves as there were tribes in Israel, signifying that God keeps a constant and plentiful table in his church for all believers.[1]

Ordinances are *canales gratiæ*, conduit-pipes whereby the water of life is derived from Christ in the hearts of Christians. As the light and beams of the sun is the *vehiculum* or chariot to convey the heat and influence of the sun to the world; so the ordinances of God are the chariots whereby God conveyeth the heat of his grace, and the influences of his Spirit to men and women. Saints behold his face in the glass of ordinances, and are 'changed into his image from glory to glory,' 2 Cor. iii. 18. Those divine graces, which are for meat to satisfy, and for medicine to heal the soul, are found growing only upon the banks of the waters of the sanctuary; therefore go to ordinances, as the viemalim, a bird in America, flieth to the fields for the dew which falls down from heaven there, upon which it liveth.[2]

Socrates one day meeting Xenophon, the son of Corillus,[3] in a certain port town, stopped him with his staff, and asked him, Where was the place where several commodities were to be had? He answered him readily, In such a place. Then saith Socrates, Where is the place that a man might be made good? Xenophon answered, He could not tell. Then follow thou me, saith Socrates, and thou shalt learn: and from that time he became Socrates' scholar. The ordinances of God are the places for both; there true riches and virtue may be had; the temple is both the exchange for traffic, and a school for learning: the good Master teacheth his scholars there those lessons which make them wise to salvation.

Reader, the ordinances are the food of the soul—milk for babes and meat for men—do thou feed on them to get spiritual health and strength; it is a shame for a Christian to be like an ant, busy

[1] Moses unveiled, cap. 27, p. 10.

[2] Clark Mir., part ii. p. 213.

[3] Diog. in vit. Socr.

about a mole-hill, and never to grow greater. Go to those wells, that the vessels of thy soul may be filled with living water.

David longed (as a woman with child, so the word signifieth) to see the beauty of the Lord, and receive of his bounty in the sanctuary, Ps. lxxxiv. 2, lxiii. 1, 2, and xxvii. Thou goest to the market to supply thy bodily necessities, and art ashamed to come home empty. Dost thou not come to the ordinances of God for the relief of thy soul indigencies, and art thou not grieved to come away poor and beggarly? Merchants take in some goods from one part, some from another part, and at last come home richly laden: do thou get some true riches at prayer, some from the word, and then how comfortably mayest thou conclude thy duties.

Do not rest in the formal performance of duties, as the harlot that cried out, 'I have had my peace-offerings to-day,' Prov. vii. 14, and therefore all must be well; but as the people, when Moses went to speak to God for them; they all looked after him to see what speed, what success, Exod. xxxiii. 8. After thine attendance on ordinances, long and look for the fruit of them. If a man present a petition to a king, he gives attendance to see whether it will be granted or no. It is a contempt both of God's majesty and mercy for thee to throw down thy prayers before him, and then to run away, not caring what becomes of it. When thou hast been speaking to God, hearken what God will speak to thee; for 'he speaketh peace to his people and to his saints, that they return no more to folly.' Let down thy net into the waters, and expect to catch somewhat which may feed thy soul; if thou fish all night, and, as the disciples, catch nothing, look for the coming of Christ in the morning, and that purposely to give thee a good draught of fish.

Reader, remember thine errand at ordinances is to get grace; thou hast God's promise to them, and his power and faithfulness, both engaged for its performance; and it is thy fault and folly if thou goest hungry from a full table, and empty from a free and large treasure. Be as wise for thy soul as others are for their bodies. The country tradesman wants commodities, he goeth to London, where is a merchant that hath variety and abundance; when he comes there he doth not spend his time in seeing fashions and visiting friends, but in going to this and that warehouse, as his occasions require, to buy wares; and you see sometimes what considerable quantities he sends home: go thou and do likewise. Thou complainest that thou wantest grace to go to Christ, who hath variety and sufficiency for thy supply; but do not go to see men, or to be seen of men, but to see God, and to be transformed into his like-

ness; go to this and that duty as shops, (where Christ sits and sells,) and 'buy wine and milk without money and without price.' Little dost thou know, were this but thy business, how certainly, how liberally he would supply thee! Why should the tradesman be a better husband for corruptible wares, than thou art for durable riches? Alas, alas! Christ is more willing to sell than thou canst be to buy—to give than thou art to ask.

Balaam, as bad as he was, when he had prepared seven altars, and offered seven sacrifices, could expect to meet God, and canst thou, O Christian, contentedly miss him? Surely he is a pitiful beggar that can go to the gate of a bountiful peer, where is plenty of provision for the poor, and come away willingly without his alms.

A good wish about religious duties in general, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The immediate worship of the infinite God, being a work of the greatest work that I ever did, or can possibly undertake, yea, that men and angels are capable of, I wish, therefore, that I may never enter rashly upon it, but may ordinarily take some pains beforehand, to awe my heart by a serious apprehension of the unconceivable greatness, jealousy, and holiness of that God to whom I am approaching; how he is resolved to be sanctified either actively or passively, in every one that draweth nigh to him; and by a savoury consideration of the unspeakable consequence of the duty in which I am engaged, how it concerneth the unchangeable welfare of my never-dying soul in the other world. I wish that all the time of the duty, I may look as narrowly to my heart, as ever keeper did to that prisoner, for whose escape he was to die; and bind it to the altar, as they of old their sacrifice, with the strongest cords of all watchfulness and circumspection imaginable. I wish that I may perform each part of the duty with suitable grace, and to this end, that all my graces may be upon the wing, ready upon the least call to mount up to heaven; as several strings of a viol, wound up to their due height and pitch, each in their place, upon the least touch (as occasion shall be) to make music in the ears of the Lord my God. Oh, that while my beloved sitteth at his table, my spikenard may send forth a pleasant smell. In particular, I wish that I may be so sensible of the infinite distance which is betwixt the incomprehensible Lord of heaven, and me a poor worm, who lie grovelling here on earth, that I may both in my carriage and language, affec-

tions and expressions, behave myself throughout the ordinance with all godly fear, humility, and reverence. I wish that I may be so truly affected with the sins and unworthiness of my person and performances, and my Saviour's infinite meritoriousness, that I may carry all my sacrifices to the high priest of my profession, believing assuredly, that they being perfumed with the odours of his death, and presented by his hands, shall be offerings of a sweet-smelling savour to my God. Finally, I wish that all ends of pride, merit, and self, set aside, I may, therefore, attend on duties, that I may, by my poor peppercorn, acknowledge those millions of eternal obligations by which I am bound to my God; and also, that by those buckets (oh that they might never come up empty to me!) I may draw water out of the well of salvation. Amen.

CHAPTER XII.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in prayer. And first, of prayer in general, and of the antecedents to it.

The infinite and glorious God, though he be so high that he 'humbleth himself to behold things in heaven,' and so holy that 'the heavens are unclean in his sight,' is yet so gracious that he condescendeth to, and converseth with, poor sinful dust and ashes. Amongst all those ways which he hath appointed the children of men to walk with him in, prayer is one of the fairest and pleasantest. In this duty, the children of God whisper him in the ear, open their minds, and unbosom themselves to him, as his intimate friends and favourites. He hath been pleased to command it, not only out of his dominion over them, and for his own glory—'He that offereth praise glorifieth me,'—but also out of his compassion to them, and for their good, that by prayers (as men far distant do by letters) there might be a constant and uninterrupted intercourse and correspondence betwixt heaven and earth.

Men, by discoursing together, come to be acquainted at first, and continue their acquaintance by sending to, and hearing from, one another. Prayer, which is the speech of man with his maker, is a special means whereby he comes to be acquainted with God, as also to increase and continue this acquaintance. Prayer indeed bringeth heaven down to man, and prayer carrieth man up to heaven. It is the chief duty, wherein all the graces meet. They shine brightly like so many glorious stars in this firmament.

Of all graces, faith obtaineth the crown,—'Above all, take the shield of faith.' Other jewels are of great value, but this is the fairest sparkling diamond. Among all duties, prayer seems to challenge the garland of honour, 'Concerning the work of my hands command ye me.' This is the favourite in the heavenly court, to whom the King of kings can deny nothing. This duty is of such weight, that it is frequently put for God's whole worship: 'Seek ye the Lord, seek his strength; seek his face evermore,' Ps. cv. 4. God's temple, which was the beauty of holiness, the habitation of the Most High, was baptized by God himself, with this name, 'My house shall be called of all nations an house of prayer,' Isa. lvi. 7. God's people, which are higher than the kings of the earth, are known to be nobly born by this practice. 'This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob,' Ps. xxiv. 6. Nay, God himself is pleased to wear prayer's livery, and to be distinguished by the royal robes of his relation to this duty, 'O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come,' Ps. lxv. 2. Pearls of a very high price are never set but in gold, the choicest metal. The worship and people of God are more worth than all this world; but oh, how much is God worth! yet all these glister gloriously in the ring of prayer.

There is no duty in my observation which hath so many precepts for it, or promises to it, as prayer, and sure I am, there is no duty which giveth more honour to God, or receiveth more honour from God, than prayer.

Prayer hath a twofold pre-eminence above all other duties whatsoever, in regard of the universality of its influence, and opportunity for its performance. The universality of its influence. As every sacrifice was to be seasoned with salt, so every undertaking, and every affliction of the creature, must be sanctified with prayer. Nay, as it sheweth the excellency of gold, that it is laid upon silver itself, so it speaketh the excellency of prayer, that not only natural and civil, but even religious and spiritual actions, are overlaid with prayer. We pray not only before we eat or drink our bodily nourishment, but also before we feed on the bread of the word, and the bread in the sacrament; prayer is requisite to make every providence and every ordinance blessed to us. Prayer is needful to make our particular callings successful; prayer is the guard to secure the fort-royal of the heart; prayer is the porter to keep the door of the lips; prayer is the strong hilt which defendeth the hands; prayer perfumes every relation; prayer helps us to profit by every condition; prayer is the chemist that turns all into gold;

prayer is the master-workman; if that be out of the way, the whole trade stands still, or goeth backward. What the key is to the watch, that prayer is to religion; it winds it up and sets it a-going. It is before other duties in regard of opportunity for its performance. A Christian cannot always hear, or always read, or always communicate, but he may pray continually. No place, no company can deprive him of this privilege. If he be on the top of a house with Peter, he may pray; if he be in the bottom of the ocean with Jonah, he may pray; if he be walking in the field with Isaac, he may pray when no eye seeth him; if he be waiting at table with Nehemiah, he may pray when no ear heareth him; if he be in the mountains with our Saviour, he may pray; if he be in the prison with Paul, he may pray; wherever he is, prayer will help him to find God out. Every saint is God's temple; and he that carrieth his temple about him, saith Austin, may go to prayer when he pleaseth. Indeed to a Christian, every house is an house of prayer; every closet a chamber of presence; and every place he comes to an altar, whereon he may offer the sacrifice of prayer.

Prayer is a humble lifting up the heart, or pouring out the soul to God in the name of Christ; it is a crying, *Abba, Father!* As Scripture is God's letter, wherein he openeth his mind to man, so prayer is man's letter, wherein he openeth his mind to God. It is fitly resembled to Jacob's ladder, the bottom of which was on earth, but the top reached to heaven. A thought can fly speedily to the uttermost parts of the earth, so can prayer in a moment to the highest heavens. One of the fathers compareth it to a chain, one end of which is tied to man's tongue, the other end to God's ear. Another, *Ascensus mentis ad Deum*, A lifting up the mind to God. Paul calls it, a 'making known our requests to God,' Phil. iv. Jamblicus, a profane writer, calleth prayer, *Rerum divinarum ducem et lucem, et copulam qua homines cum Deo conjunguntur:* The guide and light of divine truths, the band whereby God and man are joined together. *Clavis instar qua Dei penetralia aperiuntur:* Like a key that openeth God's secrets. Austin calls it, *Dei sacrificium, diaboli flagellum, et Christiani subsidium:* A sweet savour to God, a terror to the devil, and a shelter to a Christian. Bernard calls it, *Vinculum invincibilis:* The conqueror of him who is invincible. Luther saith, It is omnipotent. Archimedes made such an engine, that, saith he, could I but find where to fasten it, I would not doubt but to remove the whole earth with it. Such an engine is prayer. By prayer fire hath been quenched, waters divided, the mouths of lions stopped, iron

gates opened, the bottles of heaven opened and stopped, the course of nature overturned, diseases removed, health restored, sin subdued, grace bestowed, kingdoms supported, church enemies scattered, the blind restored, the dead enlivened, devils dispossessed, and the blessed God himself conquered. The Jews have a proverb, *Sine stationibus non staret mundus*, alluding to their standing posture in prayer; the world would not stand without prayer.

When a great fire in Constantinople had fastened on a great part of the city, took hold of the church, flamed in at several of the windows, the bishop ran into the church, fell down on his knees, and would not rise from prayer till the fire was vanquished. And as prayer hath hindered fire, so it hath brought down water; the legions of Christians under Aurelius in a time of drought, entreated rain of God, and prevailed, for which they were called, the Lightning Legion.

Prayer is the midwife to bring all those mercies into the world to the believer, which are conceived in the womb of the promises. It is the Christian's messenger, which he sends to heaven for the supply of his necessities, and, like Jonathan's bow, it never returneth empty. Oftentimes, as the echo doubleth the voice, so doth the answer the prayer; when the soul, like Gehazi, asketh but one talent, God, like Naaman, forceth two upon it. 'The Lord is rich unto all that call upon him,' Rom. x. 12. Prayer is the Thames, in which all sorts of commodities are brought up for the relief of the citizens of Zion. Some say of cornucopia, that it hath all things necessary for food in it. Prayer hath in it all things pertaining to this life and a better.

It is said of the pope, he can never want money while he can hold a pen; his writing of pardons and indulgences filleth his coffers; it is more true of the Christian, he need never want if he will but pray. Prayer is a key to God's own coffers, wherein there are infinite and all sorts of comforts. I have no friend, said a good woman, but I have a prayer; and so long as I have a praying heart, God will find a pitying heart and a helping hand. It is but Ask, and receive; seek, and find; knock, and it shall be opened, Mat. vii. 7, 8. The child presenteth his petition to his father, and at the foot of it there is *fiat* quickly written.

Prayer is like the Spaniards' Plate-fleet, which returns home worth thousands and millions. A courtier will sometimes get more by a petition to his prince in a morning than some tradesmen do all their lives. A regenerate person being in favour at court gaineth more by a morning prayer than a wicked man, though he

works hard, gets while he liveth. 'I never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.' Some asked but the cure of their bodies, when God healed their bodies and souls too; he hath forced many an unexpected favour upon an upright fervent prayer.

Prayer is not only a storehouse of mercies, but a fort-royal to defend the soul against miseries; as some write of the herb *panaces*, it is good for all diseases. When Satan entered the field against Paul, the apostle held up this shield of prayer to defend himself against his fiery darts. 'For this I besought the Lord thrice,' 2 Cor. xii. 7. Prayer hath stormed and surprised more cities, conquered and routed more armies, than old men's heads, or young men's hands, than all the policy and power on earth.

Prayer is like the ring which Queen Elizabeth gave to the Earl of Essex, bidding him, if he were in any distress, send that ring to her, and she would help him. God commandeth his people, if they be in any perplexity, to send this ring to him: 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will hear thee, and thou shalt glorify me,' Ps. l. 15.

Oh, what a privilege dost thou enjoy, reader, in having freedom of access to the throne of grace! The Persian kings took state upon them, and enacted, that none should come uncalled, upon pain of death; but the gates of heaven, as the *Ædiles* at Rome, are always open; thou hast liberty, night and day, of presenting thy petitions in the name of Christ to the King of the whole earth, and needest not fear (so thy prayers be according to Scripture directions) so much as a chiding for thy presumption. The poets say that *Litæ*, prayers, are Jupiter's daughters, and always about the throne. If it be esteemed such a favour to have an earthly prince's ear, what a favour art thou invested with that hast the ear of the 'blessed and only potentate'? Elisha offered his courteous host a great kindness, when he asked her, 'Wilt thou be spoken for to the king?' 2 Kings iv. 13. Some purchase that liberty, as the chief captain his Roman freedom, with a great sum, but thou mayest speak to the King of kings thyself, and be welcome, and needest not be at the charge of having either saints or angels thy mediators, or any of those heavenly courtiers, to bring thee into the king's presence. The Son of God himself will do it for thee *gratis*. 'In him we have boldness,' Eph. iii. 12; παῤῥησίαν, liberty of speech, freedom to speak all thy mind, to lay open thy very inwards to God. If thou art in doubts about thy spiritual estate, and about thy title to the inheritance of the saints in light, thou mayest by prayer go to him who is 'marvellous in counsel,' and

have his advice for nothing. If any disease appear in thy soul, which thou fearest may endanger its life, at least hinder its peace and health, thou mayest by prayer knock up the true physician at midnight, and prevail with him to hasten to thy help and cure. If thou art surrounded with many and bloody enemies, that thou knowest not what to do, nor where to go, thou mayest by prayer send post to heaven, and thou needest not fear but Christ will meet the messenger half-way, and come in timely to thy rescue. If thou art bound with the bond of iniquity, and, like Peter, watched narrowly night and day; nay, though thou art encompassed round with the black guard of hell, lest thou shouldest make an escape, yet 'prayer without ceasing' would knock off thy chains, break open the prison doors, and, in spite of all the legions of devils that kept thee, set thee at liberty. If thou art, like the Psalmist, overwhelmed with sorrow, this sighing into God's ears by prayer will ease thy heart. When the glass of thy soul is so full of those strong spirits, fear and grief, that it threateneth to burst, thou mayest give it vent by prayer to God, and there will be no danger. Whilst thou art in this valley of tears, thou art encompassed with enemies, hast many and urgent necessities, doubts, and dangers; but prayer, like Moses, will go before thee, engage him on thy side that will overcome them all, and guide thee all the way through the wilderness of this world to the very borders of Canaan, and never leave thee till thou comest to enter into the place of praise.

But, reader, the more richly this vessel of prayer is laden, the more careful and skilful must the pilot be that steers it, lest it suffer shipwreck. Queens that have great heirs in their wombs must be tenderly used, lest they miscarry. If prayer be so bountiful a friend, as thou hast heard, thou oughtest to be the more fearful of abusing it. Princes who allow favourites their ears, yet expect that they should know their distance, and ask in such a manner as they appoint, and such things for the matter as will be consistent with their honour to give; or else, instead of a grant, they may meet with a repulse and a sharp reproof. Haman, though he were so intimate with the king that he had his hand and seal at pleasure, found by woeful experience what it was to abuse the king's favour, by desiring the satisfaction of his own lust in that which was exceedingly to the king's loss.

The incense under the ceremonial law was a type of prayer—'Let my prayer come before thee like incense;' but if it had not been made exactly, both for matter and manner, according to God's own prescription, who himself gave special direction about it, Exod. xxx.

34–36; as sweet as the spices were, it had been loathsome and unsavoury to him; the burning of incense had been but as the blessing of an idol, Isa. lxvi. 3. I shall therefore, for thy right management of this duty, which is of such weight and importance to thee, speak to these three particulars:—

1. To the *antecedents*, or those things which must go before prayer.

2. To the *concomitants*, or those things which must accompany prayer.

3. To the *consequents*, or those things which must follow after prayer.

1. To the *antecedents* of prayer.—Preparation is necessary before prayer. Zophar acquainteth Job how his prayers might come to be prevalent, 'If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hand unto him,' Job xi. 13. The heart is the forge where these vessels for the sanctuary are formed and fashioned and made in secret; the tongue is but the shop wherein they are exposed to public view; therefore the heart must do its work well before the tongue can commend its ware; the heart must 'indite a good matter' before the tongue will be as 'the pen of a ready writer.'

God commandeth us both to look to our hearts and mouths when we are in his house: 'Be not rash with thy mouth to utter anything before God, and keep thy feet when thou art in the house of God,' Eccles. v. 1, 2. The former is a bridle for our mouths and expressions, the latter is a guard for our hearts and affections.

In reference to the antecedents—1, Some things which will further the duty must be used; 2, Some things which will hinder the duty must be refused.

(1.) First, Those things which will further the duty are meditation and the stirring up of grace. Meditation will be helpful to the matter of prayer; the quickening and stirring up of grace will be helpful to the manner of the duty.

[1.] First, Meditation.—Meditation fits the soul for supplication; meditation fills the soul with good liquor, and then prayer broaches it, and sets it a-running. David first mused, and then spake with his tongue, 'Lord, make me to know mine end,' Psa. xxxix. 3, 4. Nay, to assure us that meditation was the mother which bred and brought forth prayer, he calls the child by its parents' name, 'Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation,' Ps. v. 1. Meditation is like the charging of a piece, and prayer the discharging of it. Isaac 'went into the field to meditate,' Gen. xxiv. 63. The Septuagint, the Geneva translation, and Tremellius, in his mar-

ginal notes on it, read it to 'pray;' and the Hebrew word *suach* used there signifieth both to *pray* and *meditate;* whereby we may learn that they are very near akin; like twins, they lie in the same womb, in the same word. Meditation is the best beginning of prayer, and prayer is the best conclusion of meditation. When the Christian, like Daniel, hath first opened the windows of his soul by contemplation, then he may kneel down to prayer.

Prayer is a building which reacheth up to heaven, meditation layeth in all the costly materials which are requisite for this building. He that would make any riddance of his work must take care that all his materials be brought in beforehand; if they be to fetch when he comes to work, he will make long and tedious church-work indeed.

Something thou art to meditate on relating to thyself, something relating to God.

Those things which relate to thyself are thy sins, wants, and mercies. There are three parts of prayer, though I know some reckon the first rather an adjunct—confession, petition, and thanksgiving. Now meditation gives each of these the work which they are to do; like a faithful steward it gives every one their proper and peculiar portion. Meditation on our sins helpeth in confession, meditation on our wants helpeth in petition, meditation on our mercies helpeth in thanksgiving. A Christian ought to keep a catalogue, at least in the table-book of his heart, of these three particulars. David did so; he registered his unrighteousness, or the wrong he had done to God, 'My sin is ever before me,' Ps. li. 3. He thought much upon his wants and sufferings, he often crieth out, 'I am poor and needy,' Ps. cix. 21, and xxv. 'My sorrow is ever before me,' Ps. xxxviii. 17. And for God's mercies, he did not write them in the sand, but he treasured them up in his memory. 'Thy loving kindness is before mine eyes,' Ps. xxvi. 3. And though some of them were stale, ancient mercies, yet they were not sour to David's taste; he did not throw them away as old almanacs out of date: 'I will remember the days of old, the years of ancient times,' Ps. lxxvii. Rather than God should not be paid his thanks for favours to his forefathers, David would take the debts from their score, and set them upon his own file.

Confession of sin must be with shame and sorrow; petition for mercy must be with faith and fervency; thanksgiving must be with admiration of God, and delight in God. Now it is meditation of our sins, wants, and miseries, which provides fuel for the fire of these graces to work upon, by which they break out into a heavenly flame.

Meditate on thy sins. Thy duty in prayer is to indict, arraign, and condemn and execute those malefactors and transgressors of the royal law, which can never be done till they are apprehended. If thou wilt kill those foxes that spoil the vine, those lusts which hinder thy regenerate part from thriving, thy care must be by meditation to hunt them out of their lurking holes and take them. Thy wounds, which stink and are so unsavoury to God, must by serious consideration be searched and felt before they can be healed. When thou art going to prayer, do as Jehu, when he went to sacrifice to Baal, send out and fetch in all thy false worshippers, those enemies of the true God, that deny his supremacy, and bow the knee to the world or the flesh, and then by a humble penitential confession, and self-judging, cut them off. Who ever bewailed his sins, that did not know their sinfulness? or who ever was ashamed, that did not see his own nakedness? When the Jews came to know that they were the betrayers and murderers of the Lord Jesus, then they were pricked to the heart. Oh do that for thyself which God will do for many others! set thy sins in order before thine eyes, thine original and thine actual, thine omissions and commissions, thy personal and relative, thy secret and public, thy sins about natural, civil, or spiritual actions, thy sins under mercies and against afflictions. Say to thy conscience, as Samuel to Jesse, 'Are all thy sons here?' are all thy sins here? If any be wanting to thy knowledge, cause it to be sent for and brought, and sit not down to sacrifice before it come; when this is done, put them all into their own colours, accent them with their several aggravations, consider what light, what love, what motions of God's Spirit, what convictions of thy own spirit, they were committed against.

Above all, meditate on the infinite majesty, purity, and mercy of that God against whom thou hast sinned. Those three attributes duly weighed would, like Moses' strokes, fetch water out of a rock. Ah couldst thou, that hast heard of this God by the hearing of the ear, but see him with the seeing of the eye, thou wouldst quickly abhor thyself in dust and ashes! How ugly, how loathsome would sin be, couldst thou behold the glory, holiness, and grace of that God whom thereby thou hast offended! Ah, how great an evil must that be which is so opposite and offensive to the greatest good! Think also on the blood of the dearest Jesus, which was let out by thy lusts; and surely when thou beholdest those knives before thee which made those bloody mortal wounds in his blessed body, anger and grief will both strive within thee for the mastery.

Meditate on thy wants. He that is ignorant what he ails, can-

not complain, at least so as to be relieved. The messenger who knoweth not the errand upon which he comes, must expect to be sent back as wise as he came. Do as the good housewife, when she is going to market, where provision is to be had, doth: first, she considereth with herself what her family needs, what food, what clothes, what her husband, what her children, what herself, and accordingly disposeth her money at market; so when thou art going to God by prayer, who is able to supply all thy necessities, consider what thou wantest, what pardoning mercy, what purifying mercy; what sin thou didst lately foil, and art afraid it will recover again, that thou mayest beg strength to pursue the victory; what lust lately got the better of thee, that thou mayest entreat pardon of it, and power against it; what grace thou art defective in, either in reference to thy calling or relations, or any condition, that thou mayest request God to bestow it on thee; what new providence hath befallen thee, or new work is laid upon thee, that thou mayest beseech God to give thee suitable grace and power.

This consideration of thy wants, with the weight of them, will make thee more urgent and instant with God for supply; they that feel hunger, how hard will they beg for bread! Poor prisoners that are ready to famish for want of food, how earnest are they for relief! Bread, bread, for the Lord's sake! Remember the poor prisoners for the Lord's sake! Consideration of thy soul-necessities, and of what infinite concernment the relief of them is to thee, will make thee feel thy wants, and then thou wilt be importunate with God for mercy. A man that considereth not his indigencies, is like a full stomach, that loathes the honeycomb.

Consider thy mercies, meditate on the several particular passages of God's providence towards thee, from thy birth to this moment; how many dangers thou hast been delivered from, how many journeys thou hast been preserved in, what seasonable succour God hath sometimes sent thee in dangers, what suitable support he hath afforded thee in distress, what counsel he hath given thee in doubts, what comforts he hath vouchsafed thee in sorrows and darkness. Make past mercies, by meditation, present with thee. How many years hast thou lived, and every moment of thy life hast breathed in mercy? Do not forget former favours bestowed on thee or thine. The civet box, when the civet is gone, still retains its scent; the vessel, when the liquor is gone, hath still a savour of it. So when thy mercies are past and spent, thou shouldst still have the scent and savour of them in thy spirit.

Meditate upon the number of thy present mercies, personal,

domestical, national, temporal, spiritual. How many are the mercies which thou enjoyest in bed, at board, at home, abroad! Thy house, thy barns, thy children, thy body, thy soul, are all full of blessings; thou hast many positive, many private mercies. 'Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak them, they are more than can be numbered,' Ps. xl. 5. Think of them particularly. Meat swallowed down whole doth not yield such nourishment as when it is cut into small pieces. If jewels are bundled up together, their riches and worth are hid; they must be viewed and considered one by one, then their value will appear.

Meditate on the nature of them, how freely they are bestowed. When thou wast God's enemy he fed thee, and clothed thee, and maintained thee. As when a man turneth his back upon the sun, the sun even then refresheth him with his beams; so when thou didst depart away from God, he even then followed thee with goodness; like the fountain, he giveth his pleasant streams to thee *gratis*. For, alas! thou art less than the least of all God's mercies, worse than any loathsome toad or poisonous serpent. This will be an excellent foil to set off the mercies of God in their lively, lovely colours. That David, so great a king, should do so much for such a dead dog as Mephibosheth, did exceedingly affect his heart, 2 Sam. vii. So do thou think with thyself, What am I, and what is my Father's house, that the Lord should do so much for me?

Meditate upon the fulness and greatness of thy mercies. What distinguishing mercies are thy body-mercies! they are more than God oweth thee, and more than he bestoweth upon others. Alas! many want health, liberty, food, raiment, sleep, limbs, senses, reason, and possibly thou enjoyest them all. But oh! of what concernment are thy soul-mercies, the image of God, the blood of Christ, eternal life, the gospel of thy salvation, sabbaths, sacraments, and seasons of grace. God hath not dealt so with every people, as with this nation; nor with every person, as with thee. Thou art, as the psalmist phraseth it, laden with benefits, hast such a weight, such a burden of benefits upon thy back, that thou canst hardly stir or stand under them. Hast thou not blessings of the womb, blessings of the field, blessings of the throne, blessings of the footstool, blessings in thy going out, blessings in thy coming in, which way canst thou look and not see blessings? Where canst thou tread and not stand on blessings? Thy whole life is in this respect a bundle of blessings. These thoughts before prayer may stir thee up

to bless the giver. If thou shouldst bless men when they curse thee, much more shouldst thou bless God, when he blesseth thee.

Meditate on the God to whom thou art to pray, consider his majesty and greatness; Nehemiah calls him, 'The great and terrible God,' Neh. i. 5. He is so great, 'the heavens and heavens of heavens cannot contain him;' that the earth, heavens, and ocean are in comparison of him as nothing; yea, 'less than nothing, and vanity.' Think of his attributes and infinite excellencies. 'God is in heaven, and thou art on earth: therefore let thy words be few,' Eccles. v. 2. As God riseth in our thoughts, self falleth. That sun discovereth all our dust. Oh, how are we ashamed of our drops when we stand by this ocean! This serious apprehension of thy distance will quicken thee to reverence. God's greatness, and man's vileness, are both arguments to make man humble and wary in the worship of God. Couldst thou behold God in heaven, in what majesty he there appeareth on his throne of glory, how his heavenly courtiers veil their faces in his presence, lay their crowns at his feet, and serve him, though joyfully, yet humbly and awfully, with what reverence and holy fear wouldst thou go to prayer!

Meditate on his mercy and goodness; what promises he hath made to prayer, how bountiful he is to his suppliants. He doth more than they can ask or think; he gives liberally without upbraiding. It was said of Severus the emperor, that he was more troubled that men asked nothing, than that he gave much. God delighteth both to be sought and found. This is necessary to strengthen thy faith, 'He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,' Heb. xi. 6. He that would pray and obtain a blessing, must believe God's being, 'that he is;' and God's bounty, 'that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Meditate on his rich bounty; Abraham asked but one son, God gives him seed like the stars in the heavens for multitude; the debtor desires but forbearance, and he freely forgives the whole debt. The shekel of the sanctuary is double to the ordinary skekel.

God delighteth to see men joyful in his house of prayer, Isa. lvi. 7, to see their countenances commend his cheer; now meditation of his royal bounty, how he giveth like a king, like a God, will help thee to this hearty cheerfulness. Believe before thou prayest, that thy hand of prayer shall not knock at heaven's gate in vain, that God will not send thee away sad. It is reported of the Emperor Flavius, that he should say, I am sorry that any man should present a petition to me as if he were offering meat to an elephant, with a

trembling hand. Consider not only his habitation, *which art in heaven*, but also his relation to thee, *our Father;* 'Before thou callest he will answer, and when thou speakest he will say, Here am I,' Isa. lxv. 24. Thus when thou hast by meditation cut the sacrifice in pieces, put the wood in order, and laid all upon the altar, thou mayest by prayer put fire to them, and offer up a sacrifice to God 'of a sweet smelling savour.'

[2.] Secondly, As meditation, so the stirring up of thy graces is needful to further this duty. Meditation will do much towards it, as thou hast heard, I shall therefore speak the less to it. Every person that hath grace doth not always pour out his prayers rightly. Graces must be exercised in our duties. Grace may lie as fire under ashes upon the hearth of thy heart, and be so far from flaming, that it may not so much as glow, and how then canst thou expect any warmth from it? Thy duty is, therefore, to stir up the coals, and endeavour that the fire may blaze out. It is the language of Canaan, communication seasoned with grace, which only is savoury to God. Cato being asked why he was so diligent to learn the Greek language in his old age, answered, I hear the gods speak Greek, and I would willingly speak to them in their own language. All the words of God are gracious; it is said of his Son, 'Grace is poured into thy lips,' Ps. xlv. 2. Those, therefore, that would not speak to God in an unknown language, a tongue which he understandeth not, must accent all their expressions to him with grace. It is the smell of the spice of grace in the Israelite, not of garlic and onions in the Egyptian, which is so pleasant and fragrant to God; 'Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?' Cant. iii. 6. Some take the words to be the voice of the angels, those friends of the bridegroom, admiring the church's gracious expressions, and continual ascensions of her soul, in her prayers to God; others take them to be the words of Christ, being ravished with the odoriferous smell of those graces which his spouse acted in her sacrifices; he stood amazed at the beauty of her person, and the sweetness of her breath, the graciousness of her petitions. What lovely lady, what woman is here? (so the Hebrew,) What peerless paragon is this which sendeth up such spiritual sacrifices, such sweet incense, kindled by the fire of God's own Spirit, laid upon a meritorious altar, ascending and fuming up, like the rollings and agglomerations of smoke, to the Lord himself, and more welcome and grateful than all the costly evaporations of myrrh and frankincense, and all powders of the merchants? The angel

which ascended to heaven in the flame of the altar, is said to do wondrously, Judges xiii. 19, 20. It was wonderful both to Christ and his friends to behold the acceptance of his spouse's gracious performance, how it ascended to heaven, *elationibus fumi*, like pillars of smoke, and came up for a memorial before God. The desire of nature in prayer, is like sparks which fly out of the tunnel of the chimney and then vanish; but the desire of grace in prayer is like pillars of smoke, which mounteth up to the highest heavens.

When Jacob's sons went down to Egypt to fetch corn, they carried some along with them to support them by the way; when the Christian goeth to Christ by prayer for more spiritual food, he must carry some along with him to strengthen him in the duty. A little water poured into the pump will fetch up much; a little grace acted in a duty may help thee to much more. As the ship is sometimes wind-bound that it cannot move towards its haven, so without the exercise of grace the soul is wind-bound, there is no stirring towards heaven. A graceless man in prayer, as was said of Alcibiades, may talk much, but speaketh little.

(2.) Some things which will hinder the duty must be refused.

All sin in general, sin regarded in the soul, makes prayers disregarded of God. 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer,' Ps. lxvi. 18. He that expecteth pardon must throw down his weapons of rebellion. The child that asketh forgiveness of his oaths, must not desire it of his father with curses in his mouth. When dust clogs the wheel of the watch or clock, they cannot strike true; when sin hampereth and clogs the wheels of the affections, the mouth will never speak true or right in its petitions. 'He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination,' Prov. xxviii. 9. It is high impudency for him that will not hear God, to look that God should hear him.

When the sin of the petitioner is before God's eyes, his petitions cannot enter into God's ears; the wide mouth of sin outcrieth the voice of his prayers. As the fish called the Remora, though it be but little, will stop a great ship in its full career; truly so the smallest sin, loved and liked, will hinder the course of prayer, though it be never so instant and vehement. 'The Lord's ear is not heavy that it cannot hear, but your iniquities separate between you and your God,' Isa. lix. 1, 2. Men by falls sometimes lose their speeches, men by sin lose their prayers.

When the Ninevites prayed and turned from their evil ways, then God granted their requests, Jonah iii. The Israelites cried to God, but in vain; he bid them go to the gods whom they had served, till

they put away the strange gods from among them, then 'his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel,' Judges x. 10–17. Reformation is a good usher to go before supplication. When the Duke of Saxony prepared war against the Bishop of Magdenburg, the bishop, hearing of it, falls to praying and reforming, saying, *At ego curabo ecclesiam meam, et Deus pugnabit pro me;* I will take care to reform my church, and God will take care to fight for me. When the duke heard this, he disbanded his forces with this speech, I am too weak for him that can engage God on his side.

Be sure, reader, to put away iniquity far from thee when thou art drawing near to the throne of grace, 'Then shalt thou make thy prayer unto God, and he shall hear,' Job xxii. 23, 27. Prayer is, as it were, a plaster to heal a man that is wounded. Now, as a plaster to one pierced with an arrow or bullet will do no good, till the dart or bullet be taken out of the body, so prayer will not be healing and prevalent till sin, in regard of love and delight, be taken out of the soul.

As all sin in general must be laid by, so worldly thoughts and wrath in particular. Wrath; anger, like leaven, soureth the sacrifice. 'I will that men lift up holy hands without wrath,' 1 Tim. ii. 8. He that beggeth peace at God's hands, must not do it with war in his own heart. How canst thou think that God will forgive thee many millions, when thou wilt not forgive thy brother one mite? God is peremptory that he will reserve for them his wrath, who will not remit their wrongs, Mat. vi. 15. Jerome confessed of himself that when he had been angry he durst not enter into the church, but *totum animo et corpore contremuisse*, he did tremble very much both in body and mind; Christians must be singular, as in their principles, so in their practices. It is more comfortable to love a friend, but this a heathen may do; it is more honourable to love an enemy, and this every Christian must do.

There are two things in forgiving those that wrong us. First, An inward remission of the fault, so much as it concerneth us, or a removal of wrath and revengeful desires towards the person wronging us; and this if we do not, we lose our prayers. A stormy, troubled sea casteth up mire and dirt; so when there is a storm of passions in the soul, the heart foameth up its own shame in prayer, it bubbleth up a great deal of filth. Secondly, In forgiveness there is an outward profession of this inward remission, and this must be done when the party acknowledgeth his fault. If the offender say, I repent, the offended must say, I remit. Surely, did men but consider the infinite wrongs they do, and affronts which they offer to the

glorious God every day, and yet how they expect to be pardoned, they would, when abused, say, as Francis the First, king of France, to one that begged pardon for a friend of his who had used ill speeches against his majesty, Let him for whom thou art a suitor learn to speak little, and I will learn to pardon much. The spouse of Christ is compared to a dove, which, some say, is *sine felle*, without gall. The very heathen, when they offered sacrifice, threw the gall of the beast away; and, reader, wouldst thou offer to God the gall of malice, revenge, wrath, and bitterness with the sacrifice of thy prayers? Remember, where the gall is broke, the flesh tasteth bitter; and when the strings jar, the instrument will make but harsh music, Mat. v. 24.

Worldy thoughts must also be laid by. Our Saviour, when he taught us to pray, by the preface to the petitions, telleth us where our affections in prayer should be: 'Our Father which art in heaven.' Our hearts in prayer must be in heaven; the eyes of our minds must look up thither, as well as the eyes of our bodies. The Mohammedans in India, when they begin their devotion, stop their ears, and fix their eyes, that nothing may disturb their minds, or divert their thoughts. When the meat is fly-blown, it quickly corrupts; when our petitions to God are blown upon by worldly thoughts, and mingled with mental discourses with men, they lose their sweetness.

Some poor people, whose houses are troubled much with vermin, have sometimes a great part of their small provision eaten up of rats and mice; truly sometimes a poor Christian loseth half a meal by these vermin of worldly thoughts, they devour sometimes half his prayer. Resolve before thou prayest to watch thy heart narrowly, that these may not hinder thee in prayer.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the concomitants of prayer.

2. Secondly, I come now to the concomitants of prayer; and herein I shall speak:

(1.) To the matter of our petitions.

(2.) To the person that prayeth.

(3.) To the properties of our prayers.

(1.) To the matter of our prayers: God's word and will must be the rule of our prayers, what we must ask of him, as well as of our

practice, what we must do for him. Subjects must set bounds to their desires, and take heed that their petitions do not encroach upon the prerogative royal. Divine precepts, what God commandeth us to act; divine promises, what God engageth himself to do for us; and divine prophecies, what God hath foretold shall come to pass, are to be the bounds of our prayers: he wandereth to his loss, that in his requests goeth beyond these limits. Balaam would needs ask leave of God, that he might be the devil's chaplain to curse Israel; but mark the issue, he hath an ironical concession to go to his own destruction; the sharp razor indeed of his tongue would not pierce the Israelites, who had armour of proof; but the sword of the Israelites soon entered his body, and sent his soul to receive its wages of that master that set him a-work. The Israelites on a sudden are all in a hurry for a king: 'God gave them a king in his anger,' for their punishment, rather than for their protection; and how soon were they sick, like children, of that which they cried so loud for—the king and people, at least many of them, perished together. Oh how much better is a favourable denial, than an angry grant of such prayers; but immodest desires never have profitable answers.

And as some err in the matter of their petitions, so others in the matter of their thanksgiving. We read of them that when like thieves they had robbed others, looked up to heaven and blessed God for a booty, that they had prospered in their calling: 'Thus saith the Lord God, feed the flock of the slaughter, whose possessors slay them; and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord, I am rich,' Zech. xi. 5, 6. That spurious brat the devil begot upon their cursed hearts, they lay at God's door as if he were its father.

Take heed, reader, of exceeding the limits of prayer; those beasts which will not be kept within their bounds, are soonest caught and killed. Israel had their wish, to their woeful cost, when they cried out, 'Would God we had died in the wilderness,' Num. xiv. 2, 28, 29. 'Be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is,' Eph. v. 17. Indeed, the Christian may have anything of God, if he do but in his prayer secure God's honour; but he that exalteth his own will, not minding God's, like a proud beggar, will be a chooser; and therefore he shall be sent away either without an alms, or else with the serpents which he desired, instead of the fish which he denied. The Christian's charter is wide enough, he hath no cause to desire its enlargement: 'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us,' 1 John v. 14.

(2.) The petitioner must be a justified and regenerate person, or the prayer will never be prevalent. He must be a favourite at court, that presenteth his supplication with confidence of success. Others must pray, and may speed through Christ; but where there is no faith, there will be much fear about the event. The precept is to all, but the promise is only to the believer: 'The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry,' Ps. xxxiv. 15, 17. Strangers may howl, and we take little notice what they ail—it is a venture whether we relieve them or no; but if our children cry, being in great distress, we hasten to their help. Our relation to God may well strengthen our hope, that our desires shall be heard. He that can cry *Abba, Father*, may be confident of the success of his suit, and that God will deal with him as a son.

Faith in Christ is essential to prayer, as I shewed in religious duties in general, and therefore omit it here; now an unbeliever goeth to God without the blessed Saviour, and therefore may well come away without an answer. The Israelites, in their prayers, were still to mind the temple, either to pray in it or towards it; which temple was a type of Christ, the alone altar upon which our prayers must be offered, if ever they be accepted, 2 Chron. vii. 38; Dan. vi. 10. Kings will not gratify or pardon traitors whilst they continue in their treasonable designs. A sinner, even while he is wooing God for mercy, is warring against God; when his voice is the voice of Jacob, his hands are the hands of Esau, and therefore with what face can he expect favour? 'I will,' saith Paul, 'that men lift up holy hands,' 1 Tim. ii. 8, meaning in prayer. Where the hands are unholy and wicked, the heart is worse, and God cannot abide a stinking breath. Some write of Diacletes, that it hath many excellent virtues in it, but if it be put into the mouth of a man without life it loseth all. Prayer, as I shewed before, hath many rare and incomparable qualities, but being in the mouth of one that is dead in sins and trespasses, it loseth them all. When a vicious man propounded in the Roman senate a most excellent law, they rejected the motion, because it was made by a bad mouth. When the face is comely, the person beautiful through Christ, then only the voice will be pleasant, Cant. ii.

When Godfrey of Bouillon was demanded, in the Holy War, by an ambassador from the king of the Saracens, How he became so strong to fight, and to do such exploits? He answered, *Quia manus semper habui puras*, Because I kept my hands always as clean as I could

from the filth of sin. A pure hand in prayer is ever prevalent, through Christ, to conquer the strongest enemies; but it is a principle in nature, that God heareth not a sinner, John ix. 31. The prayers of a natural man are like Jehoshaphat's ships, which were made to go to Tarshish for gold, but were broken by the way; they come short of that merchandise which is better than silver, and that gain which is more precious than choice gold, for which they pretended to launch forth: but the prayers of a regenerate person are like Solomon's navy, which were sent forth to Ophir—went through with their voyage, and brought from thence four hundred and twenty talents of gold; unsearchable are the riches which the vessel of his prayer returneth fraught with, 1 Kings xxii. 48, and ix. 28.

(3.) The properties of our prayers; they must be humble, hearty, fervent, and constant.

[1.] Our prayers must be humble. Prayer is one of our nearest approaches to God on this side heaven; in it we speak to God mouth to mouth, and therefore must be poured out with much humility. Rebecca, though she rode along on the road, mounted upon a camel, yet when she drew near to Isaac, she lighted off her stately beast, putteth on her veil, and presenteth herself to him in a humble posture. Humility ought to be a Christian's constant clothing,—'Be ye clothed with humility,'—but it never fits him better than when by prayer he doth solemnly draw near to God. We are then most careful to put on our best raiment, when we go to speak with great persons. Subjects present their petitions to their sovereigns upon their knees: 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker,' Ps. xcv. 6. Princes must have silken words given them, as the mother of Artaxerxes told one: our words to the great God must be submissive.

The special end of prayer is to exalt God and debase man; he therefore that is proud in that performance, doth wholly thwart God's end in its institution, and may be confident that God will thwart him in his petitions. When we go to God in this duty for grace and mercy, we do not go to him as those that go to market to buy relief, but as those that go to a rich man's door to beg an alms. And surely, of all persons, beggars, who live wholly upon another's charity, have least reason to be proud. The proud beggar never got anything at God's door.

It is observable, how the children of God, though they were never so rich in grace, were poor in spirit, and humble in language and carriage, when they approached the Lord of glory; every one of them, notwithstanding the greatness of their spiritual stock, sued

in forma pauperis: 'Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes,' saith Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27; 'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies which thou hast shewed to thy servant,' saith Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10; 'I am a worm, and no man,' saith David; 'So foolish was I, and ignorant, even as a beast before thee,' saith Asaph; 'I am more brutish than any man; I have not the understanding of a man,' saith Agar; 'O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee; for our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens,' saith Ezra; 'I am a man of unclean lips,' saith Isaiah. They all have learned the same lesson, as scholars in the same form; they all speak the same language, as children of the same father.

It is reported of Aristippus the cynic, that he used to fall on the ground before Dionysius when he presented a petition to him. Oh, what posture is low enough when we go to the infinite and incomprehensible God in prayer! He humbleth himself to open his eyes upon us; well may we be humble when we open our mouths and hearts to him, Job xiv. 3.

Reader, if thou wouldst have thy prayers heard, let them be humble. God loves to walk in the low valleys: 'Lord, thou hast heard the desires of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, and wilt bow thine ear,' Ps. x. 17. Though God behold the proud afar off, and disdains so much as to open his eyes, or give them a look, yet he will be sure to draw near to the humble, and vouchsafe to open his ears, and his very heart to them, Ps. cxxxviii. 6; Isa. lxvi. 72. He that can have his face shine, and take no notice, is a fit person to go up into the mountain and converse with God.

[2.] Thy prayers must be hearty; thy tongue and heart must keep time and tune: 'Give ear to my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips,' Ps. xvii. 1. If in prayer thou art as Ephraim, 'a silly dove without an heart,' and givest God only the calves of thy lips, they will be as unacceptable as Jeroboam's calves at Dan and Bethel, which provoked the Lord to anger. The Jews have this sentence written in their synagogues, where they meet to pray, A PRAYER WITHOUT THE HEART, IS LIKE A BODY WITHOUT A SOUL. What a deformed, loathsome spectacle is a body without a soul! truly so is thy prayer without thy heart. God respecteth the heart in prayer above anything; men mind the expressions most, but God mindeth the affections most. 'Let us draw nigh to God with a true heart;' 'let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens,' Heb. x. 22; Lam. iii. 41. God looketh not so

much to the elegancy of thy prayers, how neat they are, nor to the geometry of thy prayers, how long they are, but to the sincerity of thy prayers, how hearty they are. Socrates made more account of poor Æschines, for giving himself to him, than of Alcibiades, and other rich scholars, who gave him large presents.[1] God esteemeth infinitely more of a heart-sprung (though broken) prayer, than of dissembling petitions, clothed with and dressed up in the neatest and most gaudy expressions.

The heart is the metal of the bell, the tongue is but the clapper: when the metal of the bell is right and good, (as silver,) such will the sound be; if the metal of the bell be cracked or lead, the sound will soon discover it to a judicious ear. God can see the diseases and spots of the heart upon the tongue. Oh it is dangerous to do, as some princes with their neighbours, who set on foot a treaty of peace for their own ends, but resolve beforehand that it shall never be brought to any period. As Jacob said to his mother, 'If I dissemble, my father will find me out, and I shall meet with a curse instead of a blessing:' so say I to thee, If thou dissemblest in prayer, thy God will find thee out, and thou wilt meet with a curse, a blow, instead of a blessing. There is no going to God, as Jeroboam's wife thought to go to the prophet, in a disguise.

Under the law, the inward parts were only to be offered to God in sacrifice, the skin belonged to the priests: whence Origen inferreth,[2] That truth in the inward parts is that which is most pleasing in a sacrifice. Indeed others compass God about with lies, and therefore highly provoke him. 'They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue, for their heart was not right with him,' Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37; Hosea xi. 12. It is sinful for thee to tell a lie to thy fellow-creature, but how abominable is it to tell a lie to the almighty Creator! Thy prayer without thy heart will be a sacrilege, not a sacrifice.

When the heart is *rector chori*, chief leader of the choir, then the voice is pleasant indeed in God's ear. 'The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth,' Ps. cxlv. 18. When the wife giveth the husband her heart, and defileth not the marriage bed, he will, if wise, bear with many infirmities in her. When the heart in prayer is devoted to God, he is pleased out of his grace and goodness to pardon and pass by many imperfections in the duty; but if that bed be prostituted to any other,

[1] Senec., lib. i. de benef. cap. 8.

[2] Notandum illud est quod quæ offeruntur in holocaustam interiora sunt; quod exterius est, Domino non offertur, ut pellis.—*Hom.* 5.

he gives a divorce to the sacrifice, and putteth it away, for he is a jealous God. Jacob's small present could not but be acceptable to Joseph, because it was 'the best of the land.' The heart of man is but little, yet it is the best of man, and therefore taken kindly by God. The main inquiry at prayer is concerning the heart: as Jonadab was asked by Jehu, so is the Christian by God, 'Is thy heart right, as mine is? Then come up into my chariot.' Then come to the throne of grace, and welcome.

[3.] Thirdly, Thy prayers must be fervent. Prayer is a duty which consisteth not in words or expressions, but in the working of the affection; therefore it is called a crying to God: 'Out of the depth I have cried to thee,' Ps. cxxx. A rending the heart, Joel ii. 13, as if the heart were by prayer torn in pieces; and a pouring out the soul, as if the body had been left without life, the soul being departed, and ascended to heaven in holy petitions. The true beggar is ever earnest for spiritual alms; he will not let God go without a blessing, Gen. xxxii. Paulus Æmilius being to fight with the Macedonians, would never give over sacrificing to his god Hercules, till he had some sign of victory. The Christian is more urgent with the true God than the heathen is with his god of clouts. When Daniel prayed, with what force were his words uttered! with what fire was his sacrifice offered! 'O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, defer not for the Lord's sake.' That wine is best which is fullest of these heavenly spirits. Winter fruits are sour and unpleasant to men, and so are cold petitions to God, Dan. ix. 13. Reader, when thou art praying for pardon, how shouldst thou even pour out thy soul! Alas! when thou considerest, if God do not pardon, I perish eternally; if sin be imputed, I am damned. How should thy heart cry out, 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; after the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out mine iniquities.' Again, 'Wash me from mine iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin.' And again, 'Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.' Once more, 'Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation,' Ps. li. 1, 2, 11, 14. When thou art begging grace and purity, with what earnestness shouldst thou pray! believing how destructive sin is to thy precious soul, and how offensive to the jealous, just, and almighty God, and in what absolute necessity thou standest in of holiness, without which thou canst never see God. As when the clock strikes, the wheels within move notably, we may hear them run round; so when thy tongue is pleading with God for remission of sins, and repentance towards God for the Son of God,

the Spirit of God, and thine everlasting salvation, how should thine heart move! what work should there be among thine affections, to enforce those weighty petitions! This fervency is necessary to prepare thy soul for the mercy thou desirest. What men get lazily they spend lavishly; but that food which a devout woman longeth for, she prizeth much, and eateth with most delight. When one whispered Demosthenes in the ear that he was beaten, and desired him to plead his cause, the orator would not believe him, till at last the man cried out; Now, saith he, I feel your cause.

It is the intension of the spirit, which giveth efficacy to our petitions; it is not the length of the arm, but the strength of it, which draweth the bow, so as to make the arrow fly fast and far. Fervency to prayer is as wings to the bird, by which it mounteth up to heaven: 'The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous prevaileth much,' James v. 16. When prayers are drivelled like rheum out of a man's mouth, they fall down at his feet. The mother will let the child alone, if it only whimper and whine a little in the cradle, but when it crieth outright, then she hasteth to take it up: 'This poor man cried,'—was not dull and drowsy, there is his fervency—'and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles,' Ps. xxxiv. 9. Here is his prevalency. There is no getting to the Indian mines by the cold northern seas, though because it is a shorter cut, some have attempted that way, but they lost their labour. Other duties are a serving God, prayer is a seeking God; now they that seek him early shall find him, Prov. viii. 17. A low voice doth not cause a loud echo, neither doth a lazy prayer procure a liberal answer. Sleepy requests cause but dreams, mere fancied returns. When there is a cushion of ease under the knees, and a pillow of idleness under the elbows, there is little work to be done.

When Daniel had been fervent all day at prayer, an angel is sent to him at night with an answer. Importunity prevaileth with an unjust judge; much more with a righteous and gracious God. Though God be almighty, yet a fervent prayer, through his grace, hath held his hands: 'Let me alone,' Exod. xxxii. Who holdeth thee, Lord? saith Austin. Moses' earnest cry was the cord, which, I may speak with reverence, fastened God's hands.

Prayer is a sword to wound both sin and Satan, but fervency is the edge of it, doing the execution: 2 Cor. xii., 'For this I besought the Lord thrice.' When a man strikes his enemies with his full strength, then the wounds are made.

The lack of this fervency is the loss of many prayers. The lazy

petition tires before it comes half-way to heaven: indeed it is eaten up, as the cold honey of wasps and flies, of wandering thoughts; when fervent prayers, like honey boiling over the fire, is free from such ill guests. An idle prayer, like a lazy beggar, wandereth and gaddeth up and down, and, as a rolling stone, gathereth no moss. The working of the affections in prayer, like David's harp, allayeth those devils which would disturb the Christian in this duty. When a man is intent upon the God to whom he prayeth, and eager after the mercies for which he prayeth, though the world whisper him in the ear, he cannot hear; though Satan jog him by the elbow, he will not heed him.

But here a caution will be seasonable: The fire of thy fervency must be from heaven, not such strange fire as Nadab and Abihu offered to the Lord; I mean, it must not be the voice of nature—an earnest cry for the enjoyment of creatures—but the voice of the Spirit, an importunate desire for conformity to, and communion with, the Lord Jesus Christ. We read of those that howled upon their beds for corn and wine and oil, Hosea vii. 17. Many, like children, roar, are much out of quiet, disturb others with the noise they make; but it is for clouts for a baby. 'Who will shew us any good?' The voice of a saint must be, as of a wise son at full age, for the inheritance: 'Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.'

The petitioner herein must be very careful: he that rides apace had need to be sure that he is in the right way, or else, the freer his horse is, the more he wandereth to his loss. The greater the fire is, the more watchful we must be that it be kept within the chimney; the more earnest our affections are, the more we must mind what our petitions be: the promises of God must be the foundation of our prayers. What he promiseth to give I may pray to receive: 'Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope,' Ps. cxix. 49. But it is dangerous for the building to jut out (upon the king's highway) beyond the foundation; this may cause the house to fall or be taken down. Because 'godliness hath the promise of this life,' I am bound to pray, 'Give me this day my daily bread.' Temporal good things must be part of the matter of my prayer; but because God promiseth these things conditionally—so far only as he seeth fit for his honour and my comfort—therefore I must pray for them conditionally. The apish child that crieth and squeaketh for the knife, to be its own carver, and will not be satisfied with its parents feeding it, deserveth the rod; our prayers, both for the matter and the manner, must run

parallel with God's promises. Prayer is a putting God's promises into suit; but he that sueth a bond must mind the condition in it, or the verdict will be to his cost and damage. That which boils gently over a small fire may be of use to us, which, if it should boil hastily, and run over, it may raise ashes enough to spoil itself. The way to lose our requests for temporals is to be as hot and hasty for them as if they were our all, even our eternals.

That incomparable pattern of prayers, the Lord's prayer—which is like a standard measure in a corporation town, for present use, and an example for others—hath five petitions for spirituals, and but one for temporals.

God hath promised spiritual things absolutely, therefore thou mayest desire them absolutely: for pardon, and the image of God, and the blood of Christ, and fulness of joy in the other world, thou mayest be as earnest (so[1] humble and reverent) as thou wilt. And oh, what a mercy is it that God, though, like a wise father, he deny us leave to cry for the candle which would burn, and the thorns which would prick our fingers, yet he giveth us liberty, nay, commandeth us, to besiege and storm heaven, to follow him up and down, to cry day and night, to give him no rest, to be instant, urgent, and fervent with him, that our persons may be justified, our natures sanctified, and our souls and bodies glorified eternally!

[4.] Fourthly, Thy prayers must be constant: thy duty is to give thyself to prayer, as a servant devoted to, and at the command of, his noble master. This fire, like that on the altar, must never go out day nor night: 'Night and day praying exceedingly,' 1 Thes. iii. 10. Paul speaks as if his practice had been nothing but prayer; he did that so much that he seemed to do nothing else. Prayer is a saint's breath, which he constantly draweth: Eph. vi. 18, 'Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.' Those that work in iron mills keep a continual fire; though they suffer it sometimes to slack or abate, yet never to go out. A Christian's prayer may have an intermission, but never a cessation.

Our blessed Saviour, besides his set times for ordinary, did pray whole nights. David was a good husband, up early at it: 'Mine eyes prevent the dawning of the morning,' Ps. cxix. 147. At night he was late at this duty: 'At midnight will I rise to give thanks to thee,' Ps. cxix. 62. This surely was his meaning when he said he should dwell in the house of the Lord for ever; he would be ever in the house of prayer.

[1] That is, 'provided you are.'—ED.

Gregory writes of his aunt Trucilla, that her elbows were as hard as a horn, by often leaning upon a desk when she prayed.

Joachim, the father of the Virgin Mary, used to say that prayer was his meat and drink.

There is no duty enjoined a Christian for his constant trade so much as prayer: 'Pray always,' 'pray continually,' 'pray without ceasing,' 'pray with perseverance,' 'pray evermore.' But why is all this? would God have his people do nothing else but pray? must they cast by their callings, cast off all care of their children, and shut themselves up into some cell or cloister, and there be always upon their knees at prayer, as the Euchites fancied? No; I shall therefore give a brief description of this praying without ceasing.

[1.] Thy soul must be ever in a praying frame. The soldier hath his weapons ready, though not always in fight with his enemy. Thy heart must be ever in tune, and ready upon the least touch to make heavenly music. The church's lips are compared to a honeycomb, Cant. iv. 11. The honeycomb doth not always drop, but it is always ready to drop. The believer's spirit is like fire upon the hearth; though it do not blaze, yet it is ready upon any opportunity to be blown up into a flame.

[2.] No considerable business must be undertaken without prayer. Thou art God's servant, and thy duty is to ask his leave in all thou dost: Eph. iv. 6, 'In all things let your requests be made known to God.' When thou risest up or liest down, when thou goest out or comest in, prayer must still be with thee. Prayer is the way to prevent evil. The world's poison may be expelled with this antidote, John xvii. 11. He that converseth with God by prayer dwelleth in heaven, and to such a one the earth is but a small point. Prayer is both a charm to enchant, and a scourge to torment Satan. It engageth Christ in the combat with the devil, and so assureth the soul of conquest. When the saint is fighting, and like to be foiled, either by the world, the flesh, or the wicked one, prayer is the letter which he sendeth post to heaven for fresh supplies of the Spirit, whereby he becometh 'more than a conqueror.' Prayer is the way to procure good: he that will not speak must not expect to speed. It sanctifieth our food, raiment, sleep, callings, and all our enjoyments to us. The Christian, like the chemist, extracteth all good things out of this one body of prayer.

[3.] He that prayeth constantly hath set times every day for prayer. The morning and evening sacrifice were called the 'continual sacrifice,' Num. xxviii. 4. The Christian hath his set meals

for his soul every day as well as for his body. With the marigold, he opens himself in the morning for the sweet dews of heaven's grace and blessing, and he doth at night, (though his occasions hinder him in the day,) like a lover, find some opportunity to converse with his beloved.

He is most free and fresh in the morning; the top of the milk is the cream, and he doth not think his best too good for God. His evening fare is sometime extraordinary, like the Jewish feasts, which were at supper. The spiced cup is best at the bottom. Prayer is the key of the morning, to open the door of mercy; and prayer is the bolt at night, to shut him up in safety. The Jews prayed in the temple the third, sixth, and ninth hour of the day; our privileges under the gospel are enlarged, and I know no reason why our prayers should be lessened.

He that prayeth continually doth upon all occasions in the daytime, whatever he be about, put up his supplication to God. He hath his ejaculations, his holy apostrophes, wherein he doth turn his speech, at least internal and inarticulate, from man to God. This liberty is a great privilege, and this practice turns to wonderful profit. When Jacob was blessing his sons, he takes breath with, 'I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord,' Gen. xlix. 14. Nehemiah, when at the king's elbow, would not open his mouth to the king till he had opened his heart to God, Neh. ii. 6.

When Noah was cursing Ham, he had a short ejaculation for a blessing on Japheth, 'God shall persuade Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem:' which prayer hath been answered, and will be to the end of the world. We Gentiles fare the better for that prayer. Christ upon the cross darted up a short ejaculatory prayer for his murderers, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' and as an answer to it, we find some thousands of them presently converted.

Truly, reader, I would commend these ejaculations as an excellent receipt for all companies, and in all conditions. If thou art a stranger to it, thou dost not know the virtue of it. It is, as some write of the herb *Panaces*, a universal remedy for all diseases, a special, though cheap preservative both against the evil of sin and suffering. This is the best way to avoid dangers, to overcome difficulties, and to prosper us in our lawful designs, Gen. xxiv. 12.

When thou receivest a sudden mercy, hearest unexpected good news, thou mayest presently rear an altar, and offer up a sacrifice of praise to God. If thou art protected through grace from any transgression, in which thou wast falling, or afflictions of which

thou wast afraid, thou mayest suddenly despatch a messenger to heaven with thanks, who will be more welcome there than thou art aware of. So did a good servant, Gen. xxiv. 26; and a godly soldier and governor, Judges vii. 15. 'I will bless the Lord at all times,' saith David; 'his praise shall be continually in my mouth.' When thou art in a sudden plunge, thou mayest dart up a thought to God for counsel or protection; these short breathings would prepare thee for a long race.

There are, indeed, some seasons for prayer, which must by no means be slighted; when the Spirit of God stirreth in thee, and cometh for thee, then make haste to God. Courtiers watch for convenient seasons to present their petitions to their kings, and will be sure to lay hold of such seasons. If the king himself offer any discourse relating to their requests, then they will close and strike in: when the Spirit of God in a morning or evening, or in the day time, commandeth thee to go and cry to God for pardon and life, (I speak of regular motions, for no other come from the Spirit,) then is a fit time to present thy requests; he sendeth for thee for that end; take heed of delaying or denying. 'Thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' Suitors have their *mollissima tempora fandi*, their special times of wooing. Esther waited once and again for a fit time to beg her life, and the lives of her people, of the king; and when Ahasuerus put her upon it, gave her an opportunity, she then did it, and prevailed.

Whatsoever actions thou enterest upon, whether civil, natural, or religious, let prayer be to thee, as the Baptist to Christ, the messenger to prepare the way before thee. Bonaventure, that seraphical doctor, being asked by Aquinas, How he got such divine knowledge? pointing to a crucifix in his study, said, *Ille est liber meus*, by praying to that crucifix. A Christian by praying to God, in the name of a crucified Christ, may get saving knowledge. Be confident of this, those mercies will be most savoury which come flying to thee upon the wings of prayer. Those favours are suspicious which steal in at a window, and come not in at the door of prayer. How sweet was that water to Samson, which streamed to him in the channel of prayer, Judges xv. 19, he called the name of it En-hakkore, 'the well of him that prayed.' Jacob saw God smiling in Esau's smooth countenance, because prayer was the sun which scattered and cleared that sky. When thou canst say of the mercy which God giveth thee, as Hannah of Samuel, 'For this child I prayed,' saith she; he is the travail of my soul, as well as of my body; he is the fruit of my heart, as

well as of my womb: when thou must say, For this blessing I prayed; many a time did I weep and make supplication, and lo I have prevailed. Such a mercy will be a double mercy; a *Samuel* indeed, 'asked of God,' and dedicated to God.

As Jesus Christ was more welcome to Mary his mother, when she and his father had sought him sorrowing; so those blessings, especially spiritual, will be received with most joy, which were sought with most sorrow: what thou winnest with prayer, thou wilt rear with praise.

But it may be, reader, thou art one that art so far from constant praying, that the garment of the atheist will fit thy back very well: 'They call not upon God,' Ps. xiv. 4; if so, bethink thyself, for thou livest like a beast, as Nebuchadnezzar did, though thou hast the shape of a man: 'They are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord,' Jer. x. 21. Brutes are like mutes: oh, it is a dreadful condition to be possessed with a dumb devil! When men once grow speechless, it is a sign death is hard by. If that bloody butcher can but muzzle thy mouth, and with cords hinder thy crying, expect the stroke of the axe; or possibly that livery which Eliphaz made for Job, though it was much below him, yet will become thee, 'Thou restrainest prayer before God,' Job xv. 4. The pulse of thy soul falters; thou layest by thy prayers, as some do their best clothes, till they go to church again, or for some holiday. Oh, this is a sad sign, that prayer, which should be thy element, is thy torment! Friends that love one another, long to converse together, and take all opportunities of sending to, and hearing from, each other; hadst thou any love to the blessed God, it would be so with thee. But as painfulness in speaking often argueth unsound inwards, so thy inconstancy in praying giveth thee cause of suspecting thy spiritual unsoundness and insincerity.

CHAPTER XIV.

The subsequent duties after prayer.

3. Thirdly, I shall speak to the consequents, or those duties which must follow after prayer; and they are principally two, watching and working.

(1.) Watching for an answer. Pious prayers are precious commodities; and who, unless a madman or a fool, will throw away what is of value and worth? When thou hast shot thine arrow, observe where it lights, and how near it flew to the mark. Wise men, when they have delivered their petitions to their prince, watch

and wait sometimes a year together, all the while longing and looking for an answer. Thy requests to God are of infinite concernment—thy heaven, thy eternal happiness is involved in them; with what holy impatience then shouldst thou desire an answer! 'In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up,' Ps. v. 3. The words discover David's posture in prayer, and his practice after prayer: his posture in prayer, 'I will direct my prayer unto thee.' The word is an allusion to an archer, or to a general, as some observe on it.[1]

[1.] To an archer; and then the meaning is, I will be up betimes, and take as good aim as I can possibly at the mark, and so draw my bow, and direct my arrow, that I may hit it.

[2.] To a general; and then it importeth thus much: I will rise early, and set my requests to God, as soldiers in battalia, in rank and file, in good array. I will so marshal them, that they be not routed by being out of order. I will see that they stand in their places and keep their ground; and what then? His practice after prayer, 'and will look up.' I will observe what became of the arrow I shot. Or, the word being an allusion to a watchman, as the former word to a commander-in-chief of an army, speaketh thus: When I have marshalled my prayers in good array, and sent them forth to fight against my spiritual enemies, and to wrestle with God himself for his grace and love, I will get up to my watch-tower to see what execution they do upon my adversaries; what power they have with God—whether they get or lose ground—whether they prevail and win the day. It was the custom in those days, when forces were sent forth to fight, for the general to command one to watch in some high place, if he could spy any coming from the armies with news; so when David's soldiers were engaged with Absalom's, the watchmen went up to the roof over the gate, and spied Ahimaaz and Cushi coming with tidings. Thus holy David stood, as it were, sentinel, and watched as a spy, longing every moment to hear and see the event, issue, and success of his prayers.

Men that work for a dead horse, as we say, when their business is done, look no further, because they had their pay beforehand; but those whose reward is behind, labour in expectation of it, and, after they have wrought, look for it. An unbeliever's hopes are in this present world, and therefore, if he procure but some earthly profit, it is no wonder if he look no more after his prayers; he had his pay beforehand. But a believer, whose reward—not of debt, but of grace—is ever behind and to come while he is upon earth, when he

[1] Disponam tibi.—*Calvin.*

hath prayed, in obedience to God's precept, cannot but expect the performance of God's promise.

He that ventureth nothing in a ship save a small parcel of pins, or a few quires of paper, or something which is little better than nothing, takes little thought what becomes of the vessel; if it sink or swim, it is all one to him, he loseth not a moment's sleep for it. But the merchant who ventureth all he is worth in a vessel, and sendeth it out very richly laden, though it be a long journey, yet he is impatient to hear of it; many an anxious thought hath he about it. Many a time he putteth the supposition to himself, What if this ship should miscarry? what will become of me, my wife, and children? He can hardly eat or drink with comfort, or sleep with quietness, till he hears it is safe. A wicked man that is worth nothing ventureth nothing in his prayers, and therefore, whether they miscarry or no, it matters not much with him. When he prayed for pardon and grace he counted them little worth; he prized his stock and his riches at a far higher rate, and so must needs be very indifferent whether the vessel wherein things of such small worth, in his esteem, were hazarded, come home safe or no. But a godly man hazardeth all he is worth for this and the other world in his prayers. He knoweth that all his happiness is involved in the pardon of his sins, in the righteousness of his Saviour, in the love of his God, and the renovation of his nature, all which he beggeth with strong cries and groans. He esteemeth these things as the very life of his life, and the very soul of his soul; and oh, thinks he, how richly laden is this vessel which I have sent forth! My precious soul, my dearest Jesus, my interest in the covenant of grace, my eternal fruition of the ever-blessed God, are all aboard her. If she should miscarry, good Lord, what would become of me? I am lost, I am damned, I am undone eternally. Was ever ship better fraught? Her burden is of inestimable value. My joy, my peace, my love, my delight, my hope, my heaven, my all, are in her. Oh, what should I do if the arch-pirate Satan should seize her? or if she should split upon the rock of my presumption? or sink in the quicksands of my infidelity? Alas, alas! whither should I go? where should I appear? Such a soul never failed of a rich return of his venture.

Reader, when thou hast prayed, wait and expect an answer. Though thy prayers were mingled with many imperfections, if they were the travail of thy soul—upright, I mean—do not give them over for lost.

When Moses' mother could keep him no longer, she made an

ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with pitch, and put him in, and hid it in the flags by the river's brink; and his sister stood afar off, to see what would become of him. And Pharaoh's daughter came to wash herself, spied the ark, sent and fetched it; the babe wept, and she had compassion on it; sent for the mother, gave it her to nurse, paid for its nursing, and the child became the great deliverer of Israel. Truly so when the fruit of thy heart, thy tears, and sighs, and groans, and prayers, are ready, in the eye of sense, to be given over for dead, they lie floating upon the water; let thy faith and hope be near at hand, to see what will become of them. The king's son may take pity on the weeping babe, pay the charge of its nursing up, bringing it into favour at the heavenly court, and make it serviceable for the conducting thy soul through the wilderness of this world towards the true and celestial Canaan.

Though the messenger thou sendest to heaven tarry long, yet wait and expect his return. Those that send to the Indies for the golden wedges wait many months, though they long every moment for their arrival.

If, after thy expectation, thou findest little fruit of thy petitions, do not therefore lay aside that calling: 'Continue in prayer, and watch in the same,' Col. iv. 2. Anglers, though they have fished many hours and caught nothing, do not therefore break their cane and line, but draw out their hook, and look upon their bait, which, it may be, was fallen off, or not well hung on, and mend it, and then throw it in again. So when thou hast been earnest in prayer, and yet received no answer, reflect upon thy prayers; consider whether something were not amiss, either in thy preparation for the duty, or in the matter or manner of thy petitions. It is possible thou mightest desire stones instead of bread, or fuel for thy lusts, or didst forget to deliver thy petitions to the only master of requests, the Lord Jesus, that he might present it to the Father. If any of these were the fault, no wonder if they failed. Whatever it be, be diligent to find it out; amend it, and fall to thy work again with confidence, that thou shalt not work at the labour in vain. The archer, if he shoot once, and again, and miss the mark, considereth what the reason was, whether he did not shoot too high, or too low, or too much on the right hand, or too much on the left hand, takes the same arrow again, only reformeth his former error, and winneth the wager.

(2.) Secondly, Working is necessary after prayer, as well as watching. Begging and digging must go together. Thy duty is to pray, as knowing assuredly that thou canst do nothing of

thyself, and yet to work as if thou wert to do all by thine own power. He that doth not endeavour, in a lawful use of those means which God affordeth him, to attain the mercies he needeth and asketh, doth tempt, not trust God, and may expect a rod sooner than relief. A good use may be made of that story: A carter, having overthrown his cart, sat in the way crying, Help, Hercules, help! (Hercules was counted by the heathen a god for his strength,) O Hercules, help! At length one appeared to him in Hercules' shape, with a good cudgel in his hand, and beat him handsomely, saying, Ah, thou silly, lazy fellow, dost thou call to me for help, and sit still thyself? Arise, and set to thy shoulder. Do thy part, and I will do the rest.

If thou prayest for thy daily bread, be thou diligent in thy calling, or else expect a crop out of the ocean. If thou prayest against some particular sins, avoid the occasions of those sins. If it be against drunkenness, avoid evil company. If it be against pride, avoid and discourage such as will flatter thee, for otherwise thou dost as he that runneth into the fire, and prayeth to God that it may not burn him. Such a man mocketh God, but himself most. If thou prayest for holiness and grace, hear, read, meditate, watch, use the means, and expect a good issue from God.

Observe David, his prayer was, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips,' Ps. cxli. 3. But now, because he hath committed the main charge of this unruly prisoner, his tongue, to God, desiring him to lock the double doors of his lips and teeth fast upon it, and to have a main guard always watching before the doors, lest it should break through and attempt an escape, doth he therefore sleep himself, thinking the prisoner was safe enough? No, he himself would be upon the guard. 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me,' Ps. xxxix. 1, 2. David, as he desired God to put a good bit into the mouth of this wanton beast, so he would himself keep a strict hand, and rein him in.

A good wish about prayer, wherein all the forementioned particulars are epitomised.

Prayer is one of my nearest and solemnest approaches to the most high God, and one of my choicest privileges on this side the place of praise, wherein I may go to my God at all times and

acquaint him what I ail—where it is well, where it is ill, with my poor soul. I wish in general that I may never suffer this key to God's own treasury to rust for want of use, nor to be ineffectual to the opening of the divine bounty by my unskilfulness in turning it, that neither by my unfitness for the duty, miscarriage at the duty, nor misbehaviour after the duty, I may demean myself unworthy of so great a favour, so high an honour, and so good a Master. In particular, I wish that I may (at least morning and evening) before I enter upon this ordinance, whether in my closet or family, make a privy search for those Barabbases which have moved sedition in my soul, and murdered my dearest Saviour, and that I may have such a sight of them all, in their horrid nature and bloody colour, that I may arraign them at the tribunal of God, with confusion of face and contrition of heart, and may with all possible ardency plead for their execution. I wish that my necessities may ever be in my memory; that, as the sick child, I may point readily to the place of my pain, whenever I go to make my moan to my heavenly Father; and that, affected with the weight and importance of them, I praying feelingly, may pray the more fervently.

I wish that the many and weighty mercies which I, unworthy wretch, enjoy, may be written so firmly in my mind, and presented to me before prayer, in the various and lively colours of their freeness, fulness, and seasonableness; that I may never steal the custom of thanks from my God, which is all he desires, for those rich and full vessels which he sendeth me in every day; but may pay him this impost of praise and glory with all uprightness and alacrity.

I wish that my graces may never be, like Jonah, asleep, when I am to call upon my God; but as the heavenly host, they may be moving in their several places, and fighting in their courses against my spiritual enemies. Oh that, like holy Bradford, I might never leave confession without sorrow for sin; petition, without some sense of the worth of mercies; nor thanksgiving, without some solace and joy in God, the author and fountain of all my happiness. I wish that I may draw nigh to God with a pure conscience; and before I go to desire the lovely portion of his friends, give a bill of divorce to all my lusts, and, at least, banish from the bed of my heart those enemies of his which would not have him to reign over me. I wish that I may never desire mercy at his hands with the least degree of malice in my heart, but may love, as saints, because they are Christ's seed, so sinners, and them that hate me, for Christ's sake; and, as a special medicine against that poison, whatsoever friend I should forget in my prayers, I wish I

may resolve beforehand to remember in particular my enemies, to beg of God that he would pardon, sanctify, and save them. I wish that my affections may not, as Saul's person, be hid among the stuff of worldly affairs, when I should be busy about the concernment of an eternal crown; but that I may leave those servants always at the door behind, while I go in to speak to the King of nations, and may, all the time of the duty, serve and seek the Lord my God without distraction. I wish that I may be specially careful to look up to the Master of requests, the Lord Jesus Christ: first, for the justification of my person, and then for the acceptation of my prayer; and that I may be so enabled, with the hand of faith, to put on the glorious robes of his perfect righteousness, that neither the nakedness of my person nor performance may appear to my shame. I wish that all the flowers which I present to my God, in the posy of prayer, may be gathered out of his own garden, the Scriptures; I mean, that I may never exceed those bounds which he hath set me for the matter of my prayer, but may use much caution that all those spices, which I make my incense of, may be of his own prescription: and oh that, to this end, his Holy Spirit, who knoweth his mind fully, might draw up all my petitions for me! I wish that my prayers may be ever presented upon the bended knees of my soul, and also, in regard of my body, in the lowest and most submissive posture; ah, how humble should dust and ashes be, when he takes upon him to speak to the most high God! I wish above all that I may never mock the most jealous God in this duty, by speaking parrot-like what I neither mind nor mean; but whatsoever dish be wanting on the table to which I invite my God, my heart, which I know he loveth above all, may be there, and that my prayer may be the travail of my soul, and not the labour of my lips. I wish that I may so feel my spiritual wants, that my bowels may so pinch me, that, as the hungry and almost starved beggar, I may cry aloud for the bread of life; yet not so much in regard of the extension of my voice, as the intension of my spirit. When I am petitioning for pardon and grace, I wish I might beg as earnestly, and beseech God as importunately, as if it were in the power of my prayer to change his mind and procure the blessing; but when I am asking temporals, I would not, as the dry earth, cry and cleave and gape for wine and corn and oil, but willingly be at my Father's allowance, and desire no more than what his infinite wisdom seeth needful to bear my charges, till I come to my blessed and everlasting home. I wish that I might observe that standing law, according to which heaven's bounty is dispensed,

in all things to make my requests known to God, and never expect, though the mercies of God be never so ripe, that any of them should fall down upon me in mercy, unless I shake the tree by prayer. I wish that every mercy may come flying to me upon the wings of prayer, and may fly back to God upon the wings of praise; that prayer may be the mother to breed and bring forth all my blessings, that not one child of them but may be named *Samuel, asked of God;* that when I first open my eyes in the morning, I may then, in some ejaculatory prayer, open my heart to my God, that at night prayer may make my bed soft, and lay my pillow easy, that in the day-time prayer may perfume my clothes, sweeten my food, oil the wheels of my particular vocation, keep me company upon all occasions, and gild over all my natural, civil, and religious actions. I wish that, after I have poured out my prayer in the name of Christ, according to the will of God, having sowed my seed, I may expect a crop, looking earnestly for the springing of it up, and believing assuredly that I shall reap in time if I faint not; yea, that though the promise may stick long in the birth, yet it will at last bring forth, when God will give me large interest for my forbearance. Finally, I wish that, though before sorrowful, having opened my mind to God about any suffering, my countenance, like Hannah's, may be no more sad; that I may never busy myself about God's work, the success and event of things, nor like an idle, lazy beggar, be careless about my own work, but may in my place, and to my power, be industrious in the use of all those lawful means which his providence affords me for the enjoyment of my desires, that as I did lift up my heart in praying, so I may lift up my hands in working to God, who dwelleth in the heavens.

CHAPTER XV.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in hearing and reading the word, and of preparation for hearing.

The blessed God, as he appointeth the children of men their ends—namely, to serve him here, and to enjoy him hereafter—so he doth also afford them directions about the way how they may attain and accomplish those ends. He is our master, and cutteth out that work for us, which he expecteth we should make up. He bestoweth on all the starlight of nature, which, though it be but small and

dull, by reason of our first fall, yet it ruleth and commandeth the night of the pagan world, and is sufficient to leave them inexcusable for not working and walking by it. When heathen shall be thrown into the jail of hell, and bound with chains of everlasting darkness, their own consciences will hinder them from the least thought of commencing a suit against God for false imprisonment, because they are judged not by the law moral, written in tables of stone, but by the law natural, written in the tables of their hearts.

But out of his infinite favour he is pleased to give some—in those places where he intendeth to gather a people to himself, for his eternal praise—beside the twinkling starlight of nature, the clear and perfect sunlight of Scripture, to 'guide their feet in the ways of peace.' Which word is one of the most signal mercies that ever he bestowed upon the sons of men, the whole world without it being but a barren and rude wilderness.

The word of God is a spring of living water, a deep mine of costly treasure, a table furnished with all sorts of food, a garden wherein is variety of pleasant fruits, the church's charter, containing all her privileges and her deeds, manifesting her title to the purchased possession. It hath pious precepts for the Christian's reformation, and precious promises for his consolation. If the saint be afflicted, it can hold his head above water, and keep him from sinking when the billows go over his soul; there are cordials in it rich enough to revive the most fainting spirit. If the saint be assaulted, the word is armour of proof, whereby he may defend himself manfully, and wound his foes mortally. If the soul be unholy, this word can sanctify it; 'Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken to you,' John xv. 3. This water can wash out all the spots and stains. If the soul be an heir of hell, this word can save it: 'From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise to salvation,' 2 Tim. iii. 15; other writings may make a man wise to admiration, but this only can make him wise to salvation.

This word, which is of such unspeakable worth, God hath deposited as a special treasure into the hands of the children of men, that they might 'obey his will, and know the just one.' And, reader, it is thy duty to search and study this book. When kings send out their proclamations, either concerning acts of grace, or some law which their subjects ought to obey, they expect that all should take notice of them, and give them the reading and hearing. What an affront dost thou offer to the King of the whole world, if thou turnest thy back upon his word! I must tell thee it is no less

than *crimen læsæ majestatis*; 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,' Luke x. 16. Thou mayest think, possibly, that by neglecting to hear, thou dost only contemn the preacher; but believe me, it is a contempt of thy Maker—ministers are God's ambassadors. Now to deny an ambassador audience, is one of the greatest disrespects which can possibly be offered him, nay, it is an affront to his prince, on whose errand he cometh, and whose person he representeth; and what is the conclusion usually of such bad premises, but a bloody war? Consider what thou dost, when thou 'refusest him that speaketh from heaven;' for if thou shuttest the windows of thine eyes from reading, and the door of thine ears from hearing, God may clap such a padlock of a judiciary curse upon them both, that thou shalt never open thine eyes nor ears, till thou comest, as the rich glutton, to see Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and to hear and bear thy part in those dreadful screechings and howlings which are in hell.

It is a mercy that the tree of knowledge, the word of God, is not forbidden, but commanded fruit; nay, that it groweth in the very path to the tree of life. Oh, why shouldst thou then, like the pharisees, 'reject the counsel of God against thy own soul'? If thou art a child of Adam, I am sure thou hast thy death's wound; now by neglecting the word, thou, like a frantic patient, throwest away that plaster which only can cure thee.

Do not say thou wast not warned of thy danger and duty. I do here shew thee the hand and seal of the King of kings to that warrant to which I require thy obedience. The Scripture is the word of Christ, and God commandeth thee upon thine allegiance to hear him, Col. iii. 16; Mat. iii. 17. The word is the cabinet in which thy Saviour, that pearl of infinite price, is laid up; and therefore thou art commanded to look into it for this jewel: 'Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me,' John v. 39. The word is ἐρευνᾶτε, and speaketh such a diligent search as covetous men make for silver; they spare no labour, that they may attain their deified treasure. What shouldst not thou do for 'durable riches and righteousness'?

But, reader, if thou art a child of God, I doubt not but thou delightest to look into thy Father's will, and weighest every word in it, as knowing that in his testament there is a great charge committed, and a great legacy bequeathed, to thee. It is thy daily companion and counsellor; thou darest not go without thy cordial, being liable every day to faint; nor without thy weapons, being

called every hour to fight. The Scriptures are the light by which thou walkest, and the tools with which thou workest. Let me persuade thee to persevere in this gracious practice; take the counsel of the author of it, who is fittest to give laws for thy carriage towards it: 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,' Col. iii. 16. The word is ἐνοικέτω, and signifieth to keep house with you. Do not leave thy Bible, as some do, at church, and hear nothing of it all the week long; but bring it home to thy house, let it dwell with thee. Let not the word be 'as a wayfaring man, to tarry with thee but for a night,' and so begone; but let it be an inhabitant, one that accompanieth thee to bed and board, and with whom thou conversest continually as thy familiar and intimate friend. Make thine heart, as Jerome saith of Nepotianus, by his assiduous reading and hearing the Scriptures, *Bibliothecam Christi,* the library of Jesus Christ. I cannot but think that thou hast found the Bible so bountiful a guest, to pay thee so liberally for its board, that thou hast bid it heartily welcome, and wouldst not part with it for the whole world. Agesilaus is commended, saith Xenophon, because he never went to bed, nor rose up, before he had looked into Homer, whom he called his sweetheart. Advise thou with a divine, at least, as often as he did with a profane author. Kings have their counsellors, and great men their remembrancers; let God's testimonies be 'the men of thy council,' Ps. cxix. 24.

Let not others' negligence abate the least of thy diligence, but rather, by an antiperistasis, let their extreme coldness double thine inward heat. As the fire is hottest when the weather is coldest; so David's heart boiled with zeal after it, when the waters of others' affections to it were frozen. 'They have made void thy law. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right,' Ps. cxix. 126–128.

Oh, consider what love the saints of God have ever had to his law! Luther said that he hated the books he made, and could wish them all burnt, lest the time spent in reading them, might hinder the reading of the Scriptures. 'Oh, how love I thy law!' saith David. The godly have meditated therein day and night; they have esteemed it above the sweetest honey and the finest gold; the martyrs in England have given much of their estates for a few leaves of it, and they laid down their lives before they would lose the precious fruit in it. The French protestants, saith their historian, burnt in zeal to the word, whilst the bloody papists burnt them for the word. Scipio Africanus was applauded for having usually in his hands

the books of Xenophon's Institutions of Cyrus. Oh let this book of books be often before thee, and always in thee; let it be thy meditation all the day! One would think that he who knoweth and believeth the contents of the word, should hardly ever let a Bible be out of his hand; at least he will lay it up, as the two tables in the ark, in his heart. One of the fathers calls it the heart and soul of God.[1] Indeed, as a man by his word discovereth his mind and will; so God by the gospel, which is his word, revealeth his eternal good-will to men. It is the copy of his everlasting love, of which his decree is the original, containing all his precious thoughts, before the foundation of the world, of redeeming miserable man with the blood of his Son, and making him an heir of the eternal weight of glory. Those gracious and mysterious purposes of his, which were hid in the night of many ages, when the Sun of righteousness once appeared in the horizon of the gospel, were visible and legible to every eye: 'He hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel,' 2 Tim. i. 10.

The apostle calls it 'the grace of God,' and 'the word of his grace,' Tit. ii. 11; Acts xx. 32; not only because the rain of the word goeth by coasts, as a gift of grace, Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20—'He causeth it to shower down upon one city, and not on another,' Amos iv. 7—and not only because, like a seal, it stampeth grace, the image of God, upon the soul, Acts ii. 37, but chiefly because, on the stage of the word, the grace and favour of God to mankind is fully displayed. The gospel presenteth us with the whole method of God's grace and love to poor sinners. This world is the theatre in which grace acteth its part, (the triumph of justice is reserved for the other world,) and the gospel is the throne on which grace sits, and from whence it holds out its golden sceptre. The language of the law is no less than a sentence of death; but the gospel alloweth a psalm of mercy, and in it GRACE REIGNETH, ἐβασιλεύσε, playeth the king, commandeth in chief 'unto justification of life,' Rom. v. 17, 18, 21.

But the more precious this water of life is, the more fearful thou shouldst be of spilling it. Kings cannot endure that their acts of grace should be trampled under foot. Abused favour turneth into greatest fury. Men surfeit soonest of the greatest dainties, and further their misery by that which was given them as in mercy.

Our Saviour therefore commandeth, 'Take heed how ye hear,' Luke viii. 18. There are two special lessons which Christ commendeth to his scholars. The first concerneth the matter of their hearing, 'Take heed *what* you hear,' Mark iv. 24. Ministers are

[1] Scriptura est cor et ipsa anima Dei.—*Greg.*

Christ's ushers; Christ himself is the head master. Now Christ forbiddeth the pinning our faith upon our usher's sleeve. The Bereans have an honourable crest put into their coat of arms by God himself, to distinguish them in nobility from others, for bringing the coin offered to them to the touchstone of the Scripture, to try whether it were true gold or counterfeit. 'And these were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they received the word of God with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so,' Acts xvii. 11. Men must not, like children, take down whatever their nurses put into their mouths, whether meat or poison, but know how to distinguish between good and evil. Our faith must not 'stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.' All weights and measures must be compared with, and tried by, the king's standards. The copy is no further authentic than it agreeth with the original deed.

The second lesson concerneth the manner of their hearing, 'Take heed *how* ye hear.' The richest cordial may be lost as it may be taken. It will be requisite, therefore, to give thee some prescription how thou mayest take this costly physic to thy greatest profit.

In reference to which duty I shall speak—

1. To thy preparation for it.
2. To thy carriage at it.
3. To thy behaviour after it.

1. As to thy preparation for hearing the word, I shall request thee from God to mind these ensuing particulars:

(1.) Empty thine heart of evil frames and prejudice. Evil frames. The dish must not be sluttish into which we put these spiritual dainties. If the stomach be clogged with filth and phlegm, it cannot digest and concoct our food. The light of the sun, as pleasant and delightful as it is to sound, is yet offensive and painful to sore eyes. This part of preparation is enjoined us by the Spirit of God: 'Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and all superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls,' James i. 21. If the body be feverish, the sweetest syrup will taste bitter. If any ill humour or lust be predominant in thee, like the full and foul stomach, thou wilt loathe even the honeycomb. The table-book of thine heart must be wiped clean before any new thing (as the law of God) can be written in it. Briers and thorns must be stubbed up before the ground be capable of the grain.

As evil humours, because of the doctrine taught, so prejudice

against the person teaching must be removed. Prejudice against the preacher is the greatest prejudice to the hearer. A condemned person will esteem a beggar when he brings a pardon. 'How beautiful are'—not the lips only and hands, but the meanest parts—'the feet of them that bring the glad tidings of peace.' I confess it is a mercy to be related to a pastor who hath both parts and piety, gifts and grace; and if thou art to choose a dwelling, I would wish thee to bear with many outward inconveniences, to sit down under such a ministry. But suppose thy teacher, at least in thy thoughts, is a man of mean parts, wilt thou thence conclude his pains will yield thee little profit? Truly, shouldst thou gratify Satan so far, it would be the speediest way to find a truth in what thou dost fancy. Friend, friend! doth the efficacy of the ordinance depend on the parts of man, or on the power of God? May not a costly treasure be brought to thee in an earthen vessel? Consider, thou mayest light thy candle as well, it may be better, with a brimstone match, as at a great fire. Christ taught his apostles by a little child, Mat. xviii. 2. A small damsel was instrumental for Naaman's recovery both of his spiritual and corporal leprosy. And who art thou, that none must instruct thee, but such a one as, like Saul, is higher than others by head and shoulders in gifts and abilities? I wish it be not from the pride of thy spirit that none is worthy enough to teach thee thy grammar lesson, but some head of the university. A picking stomach, I am sure, argueth a diseased body, and then a squeamish heart and itching ear cannot argue a sound soul. The industrious bee sucks honey from the thyme, a harsh and dry herb. The meat is as good in a pewter as in a silver dish.

It may be thou goest to table only for the sauce, to church for the style and elegancy of the language; if so, I dare be bold to tell thee, that 'thine heart is not right in the sight of God.' Dost thou not know that it is the naked sword which doth the execution, that a crucified Christ is the great conqueror, not a pompous, gaudy Messiah, which the Jews dreamed of? Paul is commanded to preach, 'not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect,' 1 Cor. i. 17, so also ver. 27, 28.

Truly, if thou lustest after the quails of some new dish, it is a sign that thou loathest manna, the bread of heaven; and what a condition is thy poor soul in then! They that have the green-sickness care not for solid food, but hanker after trash. They have souls sadly sick that neglect the good word of God, and long after the fancies and wit of men.

God doth, 'by the foolishness of preaching, save them that believe,' that he alone might have the glory of their salvation; 'that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us,' 2 Cor. iv. 7. When men nibble at the bait of human eloquence, and are caught, the skill of the angler is applauded; but when men bite at the naked hook, the simplicity of the gospel, all will grant this to be a miracle, and say, 'This is the finger of God.'

Dost thou not see, that as Daniel and his companions thrived better and looked fairer with feeding upon pulse, than the other captives who fed on the king's dainty provision, so those Christians in every parish, look abroad where you will, thrive more in holiness, and are fairer in God's eye, who feed on plain, naked Scripture, than those whom no dishes will please but such as are curiously cooked for a king's palate?[1] Thou wilt not believe but that thy face may be seen in a glass where the sides are not gilded; thou wilt choose a horse, not by its trappings and fine furniture, but by its usefulness and serviceableness. Why shouldst thou be so childish as to be in love with no garments but what are daubed with silver lace, when other plain raiment will warm thy body as well?

Reader, if the fault be not thine own, thou mayest gain much, nay, I must say most, good by plain preaching. Those that dwell by the sea-side gather up those precious commodities, bequeathed to the sea at the death or wreck of the ship, when the sea is lowest, which they cannot do when the waters are highest. I do not here plead for vain repetitions and tedious circumlocutions, nor for them that dress their meat so slovenly that their guests loathe it. I know it is below the majesty of a king, when he is delivering his mind by his ambassador, to play the orator; but it is not below him to speak sense and reason. Wise men love a neat, compact discourse, but it must be more full of matter than words, convincing the judgment, and working upon the affections. Plain, solid sermons, are most acceptable to pious and serious souls. There is a vast difference between washing the face of a discourse clean, and painting it; the former is lawful and commendable, the latter sinful and abominable. Ministers must mind the capacities of their auditories, and not put that meat into their mouths which their teeth cannot chew, nor their stomachs concoct. Their sermons of *quiddities, hæccieties,* and school niceties may, in the opinion of giddy men, tend to their own praise, but never to their hearers'

[1] Optimi concionatores ad vulgus sunt, dixit Lutherus, qui pueriliter, trivialiter, populariter et simplicissime docent.—*Melch. Adam. in Vita.*

profit. Such men, when their children ask bread, give them stones, which may choke them, but will not cherish them. It is a pity he should ever teach school that will not speak to his scholars so as they may understand him.

But the worst supposition is, thy teacher may be untaught himself; his life may give the lie to his lips. As to this prejudice—1. Remember that an accusation must not be received against an elder, except under two or three witnesses; thy charity, O Christian! and the dignity of his calling, must both move thee to be slow to believe. As it is sinful to raise up an evil report, (Constantine the emperor said, that if he saw a bishop committing uncleanness, he would rather cover that foul fact with his imperial robe, than suffer it to be divulged to the dishonour of the gospel,) so it is sinful to take up an evil report, whoever laid it down ready for thee. 2. But, secondly, if thy pastor, like a wooden vessel, giveth that wine to thee which he never tasteth nor savoureth himself, be not therefore wholly discouraged. If it be true that thy minister is false to God and his own soul, that he only wears Christ's livery that he might the more unsuspected do the devil's work, I confess it is matter of great lamentation; the good Lord take care either for their conversion or ejection; for certainly they, being listed under Christ's colours, and false to their captain, do his adversary the devil double service. The sins of teachers are the teachers of sins; they who forget their sermons will remember their sins, to patronise their own. But if the providence of God should bind thee to such a pastor, which is no small unhappiness, consider that God fed Elijah by a raven, and surely he can feed thee by an unclean creature. He increaseth sometimes his enemies' gifts, that they might be instrumental to increase his people's graces. It is unquestionable in my judgment, though some I know doubt it, that a sinner may convert a soul; and my reason is this, because the operation of the word doth not depend upon the piety of the preacher, but upon the free grace and power of the Lord. Yet I must also confess that I believe that God doth not so often vouchsafe to his enemies as to his friends that honour and happiness. But as bad as he is, God may use him to do thee good. As the best ministers' sermons are not to be received for their good lives' sake, so the worst ministers' preaching is not to be rejected because of their evil practices. A blind man may hold a candle to give light to others, whilst he himself remains in the dark; the Sun of righteousness may convey the light of holiness into the house of thine heart through this sluttish window; thou mayest derive water from the

fountain of life through a leaden pipe; a deaf bell may be useful to call a Christian to church; and he that never heard so as to live, may call a soul to Christ; wholesome sugar may be in a poisoned cane.

The Egyptian jewels were helpful to the tabernacle. David made the spoils of the Gentiles serviceable to the temple, and surely the Son of David can make the parts and gifts of an Egyptian, an enemy to God, serviceable to thy soul. The pharisees in the days of Christ were many of them vicious persons, yet they, sitting in Moses' chair, Christ doth not deny them audience, but commandeth his disciples to distinguish between their words and their works; he doth not forbid them to hear their doctrine, but enjoins them to forbear their doings, Mat. xxiii. 2, 3.

(2.) The second thing requisite to preparation is this:

Before thou goest to hear, labour to affect thine heart with the necessity, excellency, and efficacy of the word. There was half an hour's silence in heaven before the seventh trumpet sounded; thy duty is to weigh the nature and end of the word, before thou goest to hear that trumpet sounded by one of the angels of the churches. Consider its necessity. Mary minded 'the one thing necessary;' indeed she gave the word her heart, but the way to it was this, she gave it her ear; she 'sat at Christ's feet and heard his word.' The custom even in those days was for the teacher to preach either out of a desk or pulpit, or some place above the people; hence their hearers sitting below them are said to sit at their feet. Urge thy soul with this: The word which I am going to hear, in regard of the ordination of God, is absolutely necessary to my spiritual and eternal good. I am dead, and it is the word that must enliven me; I am blind, and it is the word that must enlighten me. It is absolutely necessary that I know my sins and misery; now the word must do this, and is therefore called a glass, James i. It is absolutely necessary that I know my Saviour, and the way of my recovery; now the word must do this, and is therefore called faith and life, John vi., Rom. iii. It is necessary to open mine eyes to see Christ, to open my heart to receive Christ, and that heaven hereafter may open to my poor soul. My soul is sinful, and it is the word that must sanctify it; my soul is sick, it is the word that must heal it; my soul is hungry, and it is the word must feed it, or I shall starve; my soul is thirsty, and it is the word that must satisfy it, or I shall die for thirst. Whatsoever conditions of misery I am in, it is the word that must give suitable exhortations to support me; whatsoever relations of life I stand in, it is the word that must give suit-

able exhortations to direct me; whatsoever service I am called to, whether of doing or suffering, it is the word which must relieve me with suitable supply. Oh, what concernment is this word to my well-being in this and the other world! I must be sanctified, or I can never be saved; I must turn to God, or burn in hell; and the word must do this for me, or it will never be done. Good Lord, how should I hear! Men are careless about things which are indifferent, but they are careful about things that are absolutely necessary; necessity makes men strive oftentimes beyond their strength. None work so hard as they that have necessity for their master.

Consider its excellency; it is the word of God. Though thou dalliest when men are speaking, yet surely it becomes thee to be serious when the great God is speaking. It is of divine inspiration: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' The Ephesians cried up their idol Diana, because it was the image which fell down from Jupiter: 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' Oh, how shouldest thou prize and prepare for the word, when it came down from the great God! Men were but the organs through which the almighty God spoke; *Non vox hominum sonat.* It is the voice of God, and not of man. It is of divine operation. 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to salvation,' Rom. i. 16. What wonders hath the great God wrought by his word! He hath given eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, life to the dead, by his word. What legions of devils and lusts hath he unkennelled and cast out with his word! Some write of the weasel that it doth *aure concipere et ore parere*, conceive in the ear, &c. He hath caused many a soul to hear and live by his word; he hath awakened many a soul that was asleep in sin by the voice of the Scriptures, and caused them to arise and work out their own salvations; thousands of poor creatures, who were sinking into the bottomless hell, have, by God's hand stretched out in his word, been delivered from going down to the pit, and lifted up to heaven.

It is a word of divine institution and of divine benediction, Rev. i. 3. It is the word in which the Father speaketh: John vi. 45, 'Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me.' It is the word of Christ, Heb. xii. 25; Col. iii. 16. In it the Spirit speaketh to the churches, Rev. ii. 11. The pearl hid in it, (the Scriptures are 'they that testify of Christ,' John v. 39,) the price paid for it, (both Testaments are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, Heb. ix. 27,) do fully speak the excellency of it.

Now, reader, think with thyself thus: I am going to hear that

word which hath God for its author, Jesus Christ for its matter, and eternal life for its end. Shall I, like a beastly swine, trample these invaluable jewels under my feet? Shall that which is infinitely more precious than fine gold be esteemed by me as dirt? It is the picture of God's own excellencies; how chary should I be of the picture for the person's sake! Ah, how tender should I be of that glass which hath wine in it more worth than heaven and earth! Would it not be a thousand pities that I should suffer the flies of my wandering thoughts to corrupt and spoil this box of precious ointments?

Consider the efficacy of it. The revealed word is like the essential word; 'for the fall, as well as for the rise, of many in Israel.' As there is nothing so evil but a serious holy person may get good out of it—like some creatures we read of, he may digest and fetch nourishment out of serpents;—so there is nothing so good but a careless, graceless heart may pervert to his hurt; like the spider, he may suck poison out of the sweetest rose. The word will work one way or other; if it work not for thy salvation, it will work for thy damnation; if it be not 'a savour of life to life,' it will be 'a savour of death to death.' 'As the rain cometh down and watereth the earth, and returneth not thither again; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void,' Isa. lv. 10, 11. The word is compared to fire: fire doth either purify the metal or consume it; the word will either convert thee or confound thee. The sea sinks some vessels, and lands others safely; the Scripture will either further thee towards heaven or towards hell. 'The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein,' Hosea xiv. 9.

Mark, reader, what an engine is here to screw thee up to the greatest attention to the word which is possible. It is like strong physic to a person exceeding sick, which either mends them or ends them. Think thus with thyself: I am going to hear that word which will not be in vain, but will either kill or cure me: this sword of the Spirit is sharp and keen; if it doth not defend me, it will destroy me. Oh, it is bad jesting with such edge-tools! How sad will it be for me to find death about the lips of Christ, to fall into hell with a stumble at the gospel of the kingdom of heaven! How exceedingly am I concerned to set my heart to all the words which I shall hear this day! for 'it is not a vain thing, but it is for my life,' Deut. xxxii. 46, 47.

Urge thy soul in earnest with these particulars. As Elisha, stretching himself upon the young dead child, at last got life and

quickening into it; so thou, forcing and stretching, as it were, these things upon thy heart, mayest quicken it, how dull and dead soever it is.

(3.) Thirdly, If thou wouldst prepare thyself for the word, entreat God to bless it to thee. The operations of the Spirit must accompany the administration of the word, or it will be ineffectual. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth,' John vi. 63. The fire burneth naturally, and the water cooleth naturally; but if the fire of the word ever burn up thy corruptions, or the water of the word refresh thee with real consolations, it must not be by its own nature, but by a divine power. If thine eye be opened by that eyesalve of Scripture, to see Christ in his native beauty, or thyself in thy natural deformity, God must anoint thine eyes therewith. Therefore David beggeth this favour at God's hand, 'Open mine eyes, that I may see wonderful things out of thy law,' Ps. cxix. 18. As good sight as David had, he could not read in God's law without God's light. If the door of thine heart be opened by this key to give admission to the King of glory, God's hand must turn the key. 'The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended to the words of Paul,' Acts xvi. Paul might have preached his heart out before Lydia's heart would have opened to let the word in, if God had not undertaken the work.

If the sword of the word pierce thy soul, hack and hew and slay thy most beloved sins, those enemies within thee, which would not have Christ to reign over thee, the arm of the Lord must wield it. 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,' 2 Cor. x. 4. Surely that voice of thunder must come from heaven, which can pluck up the strong trees of thy natural unbelief and senselessness, and pull down the high towers of pride and self. If the word, which is called a seal, Rom. vi. 17, ever imprint thy Saviour's image on thee to thy regeneration, God must add weight to the seal, or it will make no stamp. 'He hath of his own will begotten you by the word of truth,' James i. 21. He that made the watch can make it strike right, and he that made the word can make it strike home, even 'to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,' Heb. iv. 12. If the word, which is called life, John vi. 63, quicken thee to thine eternal salvation, God must breathe on thy dry bones and bid thee live. 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to salvation,' Rom. i. 16.

It was the angel's troubling the waters, which made the pool of Bethesda medicinal to the diseased people; and it is not the water of the word which can heal thy soul-sicknesses, unless the angel of the covenant work in it, and with it.

Elijah's mantle could not divide the waters of Jordan, but the Lord God of Elijah did it; the preacher may shew thee thy lesson, but God only can help thee to learn it.

Reader, before thou hearest, remember it is God's prerogative to open thine ear: 'Mine ear hast thou bored,' Ps. xl. 6. There is a thick film in thine ears naturally, which hindereth thine hearing; thine ears are stopped that sermons can have no passage. Now God alone can with his syringer dissolve the wax congealed there, and break through the skin, whereby thou mayest come to hear and live. Remember that the seeing eye, and the hearing ear, the Lord hath made them both, Prov. xx. 12. Therefore entreat him to open thine eyes, that thou mayest see his comely face in the glass of the word; and to open thine ears, that thou mayest hear his lovely voice in the word; and to open thine heart, that thou mayest receive grace from him through the word. Say as David, 'Shew me thy way, O Lord; teach me thy paths.' 'Make me to understand the way of thy precepts, so shall I talk of thy wondrous works,' Ps. xxv. 4; Ps. cxix. 27. And be not discouraged, either at the mysteriousness of the word, or at thine own dulness; for he that made the lock can help thee to a key that will fit all its wards.

But be sure thou forget not to commend thy minister to God. As thy duty is to beg a 'door of entrance' for thyself, so a 'door of utterance' for thy pastor. 'Withal praying for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ,' Col. iv. 3; Eph. vi. 19. Thy profit by him will be not a little furthered by thy prayer for him. He that loves his child, will often remember the nurse that feeds it; he that loves his precious soul, will often mind the preacher that prepareth and bringeth its spiritual portion. I have known some to praise their cooks highly, when they would prevail with them to dress a dish curiously for their palates. I am sure thy way is to pray for thy pastor fervently, if thou wouldest have him provide such food as may be for thy soul's pleasure and profit. Starve the mother, and you starve the child in her womb. If the heavens do not favour the hills with showers, they cannot fatten the valleys with their chalky streams. If the pipes be broke which convey water to our houses from the river, we can expect no supply.

(4.) Let thine end, in going to hear, be to please God, and profit

thy soul. Propound a good end in hearing, if thou wouldst have a good end of hearing. Some go to church for nothing; like the Ephesians, the greatest part knew not wherefore they were met together, Acts xix. They have as much as they come for; they come for nothing, and they often go away with nothing. Others go to carp and catch at the preacher, as the Herodians went to Christ to entangle him in his talk, Mat. xxii. 15. These go not to hear God's word, but to do the devil's work, and he will pay them their wages. These fly to the carcase, not to defend it, but to devour it. A third sort go to hear wit and parts, neat expressions, and an affecting, graceful pronunciation; like the Jews, to hear Ezekiel, 'Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument,' Ezek. xxxiii. 32. These go to hear man, not to hear God. They hear out of curiosity, not out of conscience; they desire to have their ears tickled, not their hearts touched; they hear and do not, ver. 33. Such go to church just as they who go to a noise of musicians, only for the pleasant sound—for nothing but to hear.

Reader, take heed of these and other sinful ends, lest God answer thee according to the idols of thine heart. Children go to fairs for babies and rattles, but men go for some serviceable commodities, for the supply of their own and their relations' necessities. Though foolish men go to church to quarrel with the person teaching, or to admire at some fine cadences or allusions in the doctrine taught, do thou go to the word for the relief of thy spiritual wants. 'As a new-born babe, desire the sincere milk of the word, that thou mayest grow thereby,' 1 Pet. ii. 2. Here is a good end of a good action, not to gaze upon the people or pastor, but to grow by his preaching. Some men go to gardens to gather gillyflowers or roses, merely to smell them or look on them, and in a short time throw them away; when a good housewife goeth to her garden for a better end; she gathereth them to make a precious conserve or syrup of them, which she keeps constantly by her to comfort her in a time of sickness. Though too many go to a sermon merely to look on the gaudiness of its dress, or to scent the wit and fancy of the preacher, which sight and scent are quickly gone; do thou gather those flowers which grow in Eden, the garden of the Lord, that thou mayest by faith make such a cordial of them as may be ever ready at hand to revive thy spirit in each fainting fit, whether of death, or any civil or spiritual danger, whilst thou livest.

Lastly, If thou wouldest prepare thyself to hear or read the word

rightly, leave thy worldly thoughts behind thee. It is written of Bernard, that when he came to the church-door he would say, Stay there, all my earthly thoughts! Say to the cares of this life, when thou art about reading or hearing, as Abraham to his servant, 'Abide you here, and I will go yonder and worship,' Gen. xxii. 5. If thou shouldest suffer those weeds, they would hinder the springing up of the good seed, the word. They are like thieves, never dogging thee at this duty but to do thee a mischief, either to steal thy comforts, or to wound thy conscience.

Christ sharply reproveth the Jews for turning his Father's house, which should be called a house of prayer, into a den of thieves; but how did they do this? By buying, and selling, and changing money in the temple. If thou, reader, shouldst in thine heart be buying in thy provision, or selling out thy commodities, or hankering after thine hoards and heaps of corn, or wares, or money, when thou art in God's house, thou turnest the house of prayer into a den of thieves; therefore thy best way is to keep them out, and if they come in afterwards, (as Christ did,) to whip them out.

When men hear with their harvest-ears, (meditating and musing on their flocks, or shops, or fields,) no wonder if the word be ineffectual to them. If the wits of men be a wool-gathering, the word of God will be 'like water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.' Some garden seeds are mingled with ashes when they are sown, and thereby they spring up the better; but this seed must not be mixed with dust and ashes; if it be, it will not spring up at all.

It is reported of one of England's lord treasurers, (some say Cecil, others say Burleigh,) that though by reason of his office he was crowded with business all day, yet when he was going to rest at night, he would throw off his gown and say, Lie there, Lord Treasurer! What he did going to bed, we must do when we go to this heavenly banquet; though the concernments of our families and callings throng us at other times, yet when we go to hear or read the incomparable word, we must lay them by with, Lie here, all my thoughts of this lower beggarly world! Thus I have despatched the first particular, Preparation for the word.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the Christian's duty in hearing.

Secondly, I come now to the second, which is, Thy carriage at the word, in reference to which I shall commend to thee these three things:

1. When thou art hearing or reading, set thyself seriously as in the presence of God. God setteth before thee in his word, and offereth to thee life or death, blessing or cursing, his infinite favour or fury, heaven or hell; and, friend, are these things to be jested with? Imitate Cornelius in his carriage, when he was to hear Peter, 'We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God,' Acts x. 33. The piety of this centurion appeareth in the ground and motive of his hearing; he came not to hear men, but God: 'to hear all things which are commanded thee of God.' 2. In the gracious manner of his hearing; he doth not say, We are all here present before thee, but, 'We are all here present before God.'

When the heart is awed with the apprehension of a divine presence, the iron gates of the ears will fly open of their own accord, and give the word a free passage. The creature dares not but hearken diligently to the speech of that God, on whose breath depends his life and death, when he seeth him immediately before his eyes. I can speak it by experience, saith Erasmus, that there is little good to be got by the Scripture, if a man read or hear it cursorily and carelessly; but if a man do it out of conscience, and as in God's presence, he shall find such an efficacy in it, as is not to be found in any other book. This setting thyself seriously, as in God's presence, is like the master's eye to his servant, which will make him ply his work whether he would or not; or rather like the fire to the smith's bar of iron, which doth so mollify it, that he striking whilst it is hot, may beat it into what form and mould he pleaseth.

This temper of soul in the Thessalonians was so great a favour that Paul thought he could never praise the author of it sufficiently: 'For this cause thank we God without ceasing, that when ye heard the word of God, ye heard it not as the word of man, but, as it is indeed, the word of God,' 1 Thes. ii. 13. The apostle knew his children could not but thrive when they received their meat in such a manner as the word of God. It is the speech of

Senaclæus concerning Diarius the martyr, Methought when I heard him speak, I heard the Holy Ghost himself preaching to me.

Truly the want of this is one main cause why the word of God doth so little good. The devil is very diligent at duties; he is every Lord's day the first at church. The children of God never gather together but Satan is amongst them. His great design is to render this engine of the word fruitless, whereby the strongholds of his kingdom have been battered and broken down. Therefore, as a jailer will sometimes let his prisoners have their hands and feet at liberty, so long as the doors of the prison are barred and bolted, that they cannot run away; so he will let thee have thy hand at liberty for some acts of charity, and thy feet at liberty to walk in some paths of civility, so long as he can but have the doors of thine ear and heart locked fast, that thou canst not get from him. He knoweth Christ waiteth at the outward door of the ear, that he might thereby come to the inward door of thy heart, and deliver thee a poor captive out of his hands; for this cause, if it be possible, he will keep the street-door shut, he will hinder thee from hearing as in God's presence, he will find thee other work to do than to hear. It may be he will get thee to play and toy, as he doth many great ones; or if not, to be talking to thy pew-fellows, or to be reading, (possibly somewhat sinful, at least somewhat unseasonable,) or to have thy heart in thine own house, whilst thy body is in God's house; or as a child, though thou art at thy book, he will make thee look off, if but a butterfly come by; he will set thee about some business or other, unless thou art serious as in God's sight, that thou shalt never have so much leisure as to hear even when thou art in the church.

It is reported of Henry the Third, king of France, that in a solemn procession at Paris, he could not be without his jester, who, walking between the king and the cardinal, made mirth to them both; in the meantime there was brave devotion. Alas! they that hear in jest, will find hell to be hot in earnest! Were not men Indians and infidels in English habits, did they but believe the invaluable worth of their souls, the consequence and weight of their unchangeable estates, what a searching, trying time the hour of death will be, and what dreadful, terrible things will be seen at the day of judgment! Good Lord, how would they hear! The minister need not call to them to attend to the word of God; they would of themselves give it their ears, and minds, and hearts, and think all too little for it.

2. Apply the word to thy own soul: the word is a salve of

sovereign virtue. Some talk of the weapon salve, that it heals at a distance, but the word will not; it must be applied to the sore, or it will never cure. The word is seed; preaching is the sowing of this seed; application of it to thy heart is the harrowing of this seed into the earth. If the seed be thrown on the ground, and not harrowed in, we can expect no harvest.

A good hearer is said to eat the word: 'Thy words were found by me, and I did eat them,' Jer. xv. 16; 'Eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled,' Prov. ix. 5. It is not the bread in the cupboard of the Bible, or on the table of a sermon, which will nourish thy soul, unless it be by application of it to thyself, eaten and taken down into thy stomach; the glass of wine in thine hand will not make thy heart glad; the precious promises in thine ears will not rejoice thee; they must by application be drunk down, then they will refresh and comfort thy conscience.

Faith is both the mouth to receive in, and the stomach to digest, this spiritual food. It is worthy thy observation, how frequently the Holy Ghost attributeth the famous effects and heroic acts of the word to this commander-in-chief, under whose courageous and wise conduct it warreth. The word fighteth boldly, and worketh miraculously under faith's banner: 'The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation to them that believe,' Rom. i. 16. 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,' 1 Cor. i. 21; so also 2 Tim. iii. 15. Application is the life both of preaching and hearing.

If the threatenings and curses of the law are preached, faith is to them as the powder to the bullet, causing them to make grievous havoc, and to do great execution upon the lusts of a man. Faith turneth those stones, as I may speak, into bread, and helpeth the Christian, like Samson, to fetch meat out of the eater.

If the precepts and commands of the law are preached, faith is the eye to see the equity in them, and the excellency of them, and faith is the hand to put them into practice.

If the promises and comforts of the gospel are preached, faith is to them as induction to a minister; it gives him actual possession of them, it makes them his own. Faith in the threatenings causeth humiliation; faith in the precepts causeth subjection; and faith in the promises worketh consolation.

If at any time thou goest from hearing dead and undone, thou mayest say to faith, as Martha to Christ, 'If thou hadst been here, my soul had not died.' The unbeliever, like a man in a swoon, shuts his mouth against those life-recalling cordials which are before

him in the gospel. Other sins wound the soul, but unbelief, like Joab, strikes under the fifth rib, and kills outright.

Unbelief spoileth all. An unbeliever is dead, he cannot hear Christ in his word; he is blind, he cannot see God in the gospel. Like Hagar, though a fountain be before him, he beholdeth it not. Unbelief makes the word, like rain upon rocks, wholly useless and fruitless. What is said of the essential Word, is true of the revealed word. It 'can do no mighty works, because of their unbelief.' Unbelief is a bulwark whereby sin secureth itself against all the darts and shot which the word dischargeth at it. What was the reason that the word was not helpful to the Jews? Heb. iv. 2, 'The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' Unbelief was the crack in the glass, through which this inestimable water of life did leak out, and so was lost.

Nay, what made the word hurtful to them? This leaven of unbelief soured all, 1 Pet. ii. 8. That rock on which faith builds a house which reacheth up to heaven, unbelief stumbleth at, and tumbleth the soul into hell.

3. Let the word come with authority and power to thy conscience. This is one of the chiefest ingredients that goeth to the composition of a preacher, that he speak as Paul did, 'in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,' 1 Cor. ii. 4. By this force wherewith he spake, and execution which he did, that incomparable pattern of preachers, 'the captain of our salvation,' was distinguished from the pharisees; who, in discharge of this holy ordinance, only made false fire: 'He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' 'And the people were astonished at his doctrine,' Mat. vii. 28, 29. He is the best soldier who in this warfare makes bloodiest work amongst our spiritual enemies. This is preaching to purpose.

This is also the best disposition requisite in a religious hearer; 'For our gospel came not to you in word only, but in power,' 2 Thes. i. 15. When the word of God cometh like a mighty rushing wind, rooting up the tall trees of thy sins, bringing down high thoughts, overturning all before it; when as fire it burneth within thee, consuming thy lusts, and turning thee into its own likeness, making thee holy, spiritual, and heavenly; oh this is excellent hearing, this is hearing to purpose!

The word is preached to many, and not to their profit. They hear the minister as chickens hear the hen; the hen calls to the chickens to come to her; they lie scraping in the dust still many times and will not hear her, till the kite come and devoureth them.

So God endeavoureth in his word, by his ministers, to cluck sinners to himself; 'Wisdom crieth, understanding putteth forth her voice;' but they lie scratching and digging in the earth, and will not hear him, till at last the devil comes and destroyeth them; but when the word cometh with power the soul heareth it, as Peter heard the cock; he goeth out and weepeth bitterly, when he hears of the boundless mercy which he hath deserted, and the matchless misery which he hath deserved, and the infinite love which he hath abused, and the righteous law which he hath transgressed; he is cut to the heart; he goeth out, and weeps bitterly.

The word is compared to rain, Deut. xxxii. 2. Now the rain falls upon flints and doth no good, makes no impression. Ministers drop it on many to as little purpose as Bede did when he preached to a heap of stones. They spend their strength in vain, and labour in vain; nay, like many highways and low grounds, they are the worse for these showers. But this rain falls on others to much advantage: 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers on the herbs,' Deut. xxxii. 2. The fine soft shower of the word soaks into their affections, softeneth their hearts, and makes them fruitful in holiness.

The naturalists observe of the salamander, that though she live in the fire constantly, yet she is never the hotter. How woeful is the condition of thousands, who live all their days under the word of God, in which is kindled the heavenly fire of God's infinite love in Christ to poor sinners, and the hell-fire of the hideous horrid nature of sin, yet they are never the hotter! neither warmed with the former, nor scorched with the latter; nay, though these fires are sometimes by the workmen who divide the word aright, heated, as I may say, seven times hotter than ordinary, by discovering the freeness without, yea, against desert; fulness, (a known, unknown love,) and fastness, (whom he loveth, he loveth to the end,) of this divine affection, and by declaring the ugliness and loathsomeness of corruption, in its contrariety to a righteous law and a gracious Lord, and in its opposition to the soul's happiness and perfection, that the very ministers who take them up to put them into this fire, are themselves, with the extremity of its heat, turned into a live coal, or all in a flame of love to the blessed God, and hatred against his and their enemy, sin; yet these hearers, like the three children, are not touched with all this fire, their garments are not so much as singed, nor the least smell of the fire on them. O woeful wonder!

What little comfort can poor ministers take in their lives, when they converse with such dead carcases; though they cut them with the law's curse, pierce them to the quick, one would think, with the terrible day of judgment and the unquenchable fire, yet they ail nothing, feel nothing, and complain not at all.

Reader, when thou art hearing, let thy care be, that thy soul may be changed into the similitude of the Scripture, that the word may come with power. When the threatenings are shot off, do thou fall down before them with fear: 'My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy righteous judgments.' When God thundered, Josiah's heart trembled. When thou viewest the precepts and patterns in the word, labour to resemble them. It is said of the Earl Elzearus, one much given to passion, that he was cured by reading and hearing of Christ's patience.

When the glad tidings of peace are preached, let thine heart leap with hope. Oh, let the nearer approach of the sun call forth and ripen thy fruits of righteousness! When the law comes like a corrosive, eating out thy festered flesh and corruption; when the gospel is like a lenitive, both refreshing and refining thee, then they come with power; when the threatenings, like wine, search the wound, and the promises, like oil, heal it, then it cometh with authority and majesty. If search be made by a reproof for thy beloved sin, do not, like Rachel, hide it, neither do thou fret when thy sore is touched, but hold thine arm forth to that knife which should prick thy vein, and let out thy bad blood. Be not angry when a prophet smites thee in the name of the Lord; believe it, he that hates thy sins most, loveth thee best. If thou favour thy lusts so much as to keep them safe from the sword of the Spirit, it will prove, like Joram's respect to Jehu, thine own destruction. Their hearts surely were very rugged which cried out, 'Prophesy unto us smooth things.' Those feet are very sore or gouty which cannot go but in downy, mossy walks, where the ground yields to them. Let a reproof be welcome for his sake that sendeth it. Thy Father knoweth that a bitter potion sometimes, though not pleasant, yet is profitable to thee.

As the working of physic kindly and well commendeth both the physician and body of the patient, so the powerful operation of the Scriptures, whether of the purging potions of judgments denounced, or cordial juleps of mercies discovered, do highly applaud both the skill of thy Saviour and state of thy soul. It is written of Philetus, a disciple of Hermogenes the conjurer, that, going to dispute with St James the elder, the apostle preached Christ to him so power-

fully, that he returned to his master, and told him, *Magus abieram, Christianus redeo;* I went forth a conjurer, but am come back a Christian. Oh, how happy it will be for thee, if whatever thine end were in going to church, yet when thou returnest, thou canst upon good ground say, I went forth proud, but am come home humble! I went to church a bond-slave of Satan, but am returned a free-man of Christ. I went out earthly, carnal, a malicious and obstinate sinner; but, for ever blessed be the most high God, I am come back a heavenly, spiritual, and gracious saint.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Christian's duty after hearing.

Thirdly, I proceed now to the third thing, which is, Thy behaviour after hearing or reading; and I must tell thee that it concerneth thee now to be very watchful, for many birds wait to peck up the corn as soon as the husbandman hath sowed it. Our Saviour telleth us, 'He that received seed among thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful,' Mat. xiii. 32. As highwaymen watch the honest countryman as he cometh from the fair, where he hath sold his cattle and filled his purse, and then set upon him, and rob him, so do the cares of the world dog the honest Christian as he cometh from the word, where he got some spiritual treasure, and then fall upon him to plunder him.

Besides, Satan is so subtle that he will be sure to haunt the soul after reading or hearing the word: 'When any one heareth the word, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart,' Mat. xiii. 19. The season, then, is worthy our observation. When the Christian hath made a good meal, then the devil trieth all his wiles and tricks to make him vomit it up again. Servants, when they carry full cups of wine in the midst of unlucky boys, must be wary and watchful, or they will spill it. Some people take physic, and, though it doth them some good at present, yet all is quickly marred by their neglect of those rules which should be observed afterwards. The word, possibly, when thou heardest it, made some work among thy affections. The beauty of Christ's person was displayed before thine eyes, and thy heart began to fall in love with thy Saviour. The extremity of his passion was described to thee, and thine heart began to loathe the cause

thereof, thy sins. Well, now then thy conscience is a little warmed and awakened, and the pores of thy soul opened, shouldest thou go into the cold presently, all would come to nothing. If water be taken from the fire when it is a little warm, it cooleth quickly. He that would have it boil must rather increase the fire.

There are two things which God requireth of thee, after hearing and reading the word—namely, prayer and practice.

1. Prayer. Petition for a blessing upon the word, and thanksgiving for the blessing of the word.

Petition for a blessing upon the word. After the seed is sown, the influence of heaven must cause it to spring up and ripen, or otherwise there will be no harvest. 'Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God must give the increase,' 1 Cor. iii. 6. The minister preacheth, thou hearest, but it is the Lord who teacheth to profit. Thou mayest, like Mary, have Christ before thee in a sermon, and yet not know him till he discover himself to thee. The eunuch could read of Christ in the prophet, but could not reach Christ till God came to his chariot. There is a twofold light requisite to a bodily vision—light in the eye, and light in the air. The former cannot, as we experience in the night, do it without the latter. There is also a twofold light necessary to spiritual sight: beside the light of understanding which is in a man, there must be illumination from the Spirit of God, or there will be no beholding the Lord in the glass of the word.

When the disciples had heard Christ's doctrine, they were not able to understand or profit by his preaching, and therefore they cry to him, 'Lord, open to us this parable.' When thou hast read or heard the word, go to God, and say, 'Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; give me understanding and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness,' Ps. cxix. 33–37. Entreat God to write his law on the fleshly tables of thine heart. Bernard observes, bodily bread in the cupboard may be eaten of mice, or moulder and waste; but when it is taken down into the body, it is free from such danger: if God enable thee to take thy soul-food down into thine heart, it is safe from all hazards.

Thanksgiving. Consider what a distinguishing mercy, what a precious treasure the word of God is; how without it thou hadst for ever been both unholy and unhappy; how by it thou mayest eternally be both gracious and glorious; and without question thou wilt find cause to bless the giver for such a rare and profitable

gift. The apostle ranketh this favour amongst the blessings of the highest form: 'What advantage hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, that unto them were committed the oracles of God.' And the psalmist, mentioning this differencing mercy, concludeth it with, 'Praise ye the Lord,' Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

The light of the sun, moon, and stars is of such concernment to men, that without them the beauty of the old creation would be buried in darkness; and therefore the children of God have given the Most High the credit of those greater and lesser candles, Ps. cxxxvi. 7–9; nay, they have seen eternal love by those luminaries. The light of God's law and word is of infinitely more worth; for by it the glory and beauty of the new creation, and that curious piece of man's redemption, is seen and known. What honour then doth God deserve for this favour!

Ptolemy, king of Egypt, was at great cost and charge to have the law of the Jews translated by the Seventy into Greek.[1] Thou hast the Old and New Testament both at a cheap and easy rate: thou mayest read thy Father's will in thy mother-tongue; thou hast in it a suitable medicine for every malady, seasonable succour in all thy miseries, the costliest cordials and choicest comforts, 'without money and without price.' And surely all this deserveth thanks and praise!

Didst thou but know the misery of those places and persons who want the word, surely thy heart could not but be affected with thy mercy in the enjoyment of the word. It is sometimes described by famine: 'I will send a famine, not of bread and water, but of hearing the word of the Lord,' Amos iv. How dreadful are the concomitants and consequents of famine! what shrivelled cheeks, hollow eyes, pale visages, fainting hearts, and trembling limbs, have men in a famine! they seem rather like walking ghosts, and moving carcases, than living creatures. 'The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst; the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people,' Lam. iv. 4, 8, 10. These, friend, are the woeful fruits of a bodily famine; but a soul-famine is the sorer famine. How many starve for want of the bread of life! Thou sittest, it may be, at a full table, but

[1] Euseb. Hist., lib. v. cap. 8.

couldst thou conceive what millions famish for lack of this spiritual food, thou wouldst pray to God earnestly to pity such places, and praise him heartily for providing so plentifully for thee. Their misery is sometimes set forth by 'darkness and the shadow of death;' darkness is dreadful, though but external; it was one of the greatest plagues which befell the Egyptians. When Job would curse his day with a witness, what is his wish? 'Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it,' Job iii. 5. It was sad when Paul and his companions saw neither sun nor stars in many days; but oh, how sad is it, when men see not the Sun of righteousness shining in the heavens of the gospel all their days! Such may enjoy the light of God's providence, but they enjoy not the light of his countenance. How can they work, that want the light of the word to direct them? or how can they walk? Surely they that walk in the dark stumble—'the dark corners of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty'—and fall even into hell. 'Where no vision is, the people perish.' O reader, what infinite cause hast thou to bless the Lord, that thou art not in their condition! If thou hast any compassion for the poor, dark, dead souls, be instant with the Lord; pray, 'O send out thy light and thy truth, that thy ways may be known upon earth, and thy saving health unto all generations.' If thou hast any affection to thy own soul, praise God for his law. 'Blessed be the Lord who hath shewn us light.' Procopius reporteth, that nigh to the pole, where the night endureth for many months together, the inhabitants in the end of their long night get up to the top of the mountains, striving who shall have the first sight of the sun; and as soon as they see it, they embrace and hug each other, crying out, *Ecce, sol apparet!* Behold, lo, the sun, the sun appeareth! This poor island had a long night of darkness, when the people in it served dumb idols and devils; blessed for ever be the unsearchable goodness of God, the sun of the gospel hath appeared amongst us. Nay, as it is said of Rhodes, it may be said of England, the sun always shines on it. 'What shall we render to the Lord for this benefit?'

On the town-house of Geneva is written, upon a marble table in letters of gold, *Post tenebras, lux*—After darkness, light. In remembrance of, and thankfulness for, their deliverance from the pride, power, tyranny, and abominations of the pope, *anno* 1535. I doubt not but we in these parts of the world have as much cause to set up a monument of praise and thanks to the blessed God, for bestowing upon us the light of his glorious gospel, and freeing us from the

power of that man of pride, who exalteth himself above all that is called God.

Reader, is it not a privilege for thee to sit by the fire of the word, when many poor souls are freezing in the cold? for thee to walk in the light of the word, when many sit in darkness and the shadow of death? for thee to be clothed out of the rich wardrobe of the word, when many have their nakedness appearing to their eternal shame? Nay, what an advantage hast thou, that when thousands and millions have none to give them bread, but starve and famish, thou hast a table fairly spread, and fully furnished with all sorts of food, both for necessity and delight! Yea, and if sickness hinder thee from coming down to dine or sup with thy brethren and sisters, upon that day of exceedings, the Lord's-day, thy God is so tender of thee, that he sendeth thee somewhat up to thy chamber (alloweth thee his Bible and blessing at home) for thy nourishment and comfort: 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men.'

2. Practice. When the preacher hath done in the pulpit, the hearer must begin in his practice. He heareth a sermon best who practiseth it most. What one saith of Ps. cxix., I may say of the whole Scriptures, They are *verba vivenda, non legenda*, words to be lived, more than to be read or heard. A Christian's life should be a legible comment on God's law. The strokes in music must answer to the notes and rules set down in the lesson.

It is observable that the blood was to be sprinkled on Aaron's right ear, right thumb, and great toe of his right foot, Exod. xxix. 20. The first did note his right hearing the word, the second and third his working according to it, and walking in it. The doing, not the hearing or reading Christian, goeth away with the blessing: 'And he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it,' Luke xi. 28. The occasion of the expression is considerable; one of Christ's hearers having tasted, was so taken with the lusciousness of his doctrine, that she could not before all the company forbear commending the tree for the fruit's sake: 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked;' 'Yea rather,' saith Christ, 'blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.' In which words he doth not deny her assertion, but her inference, or the foundation of it. Mary, though happy, yet was not so happy in bearing the essential, as in keeping the written, word of God. She was rather blessed in having Christ formed in her, than in having him formed of her. It was her greater honour and happiness to be a member of Christ, than

to be the mother of Christ. The porter is not so rich by carrying a bag of gold, as the merchant that owneth it. The Christian only that keepeth the word of Christ is truly related to Christ the Word, Mat. xii. 50.

It is reported of the nobles of Polonia, that when the Gospel is read, they lay their hands upon their swords, and begin to draw them, intimating thereby that they will defend it with the hazard of their lives. Saints must be ready to die for the gospel; but a Christian may defend it as truly by a holy life as by a bloody death. A scandalous conversation is an offence to religion, and openeth the mouths of its enemies; but as fire is a good defence to a man in a wilderness, against the fury of ravenous beasts, so the heat of grace flaming, and the light of holiness shining in the lives of professors, defendeth the word against its opposers. A sermon practised is a sermon in print, and by it the hearer teacheth all the week long.

The Romans were commended for 'obeying from the heart, the form of doctrine delivered to them,' Rom. vi. 17. In the original it is εἰς ὃν παρηδόθητε, 'whereunto they were delivered.' A good hearer, as I said before, is one that eats the word. Now, as meat eaten becomes one with the body, and takes the same form with it, the body and meat are so much the same that they are one, and you cannot know them asunder; so the word is well heard when it becomes one with the Christian, when they are both of the same form; the hearer is delivered up into the likeness and form of the Scripture; the word of God may be read in every leaf, in every line, of the volume of his life.

Our blessed Saviour, describing good hearers, tells us they are such as bring forth fruit, 'some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold,' Mat. xiii. 23. And elsewhere he compares the obedient hearer to the man who built his house upon a rock, which stood firm and immoveable in the midst of all winds, waves, and weather; and the man that heareth and doth not practise, to him who built upon the sands, which house quickly fell, when the winds blew and the waves beat, Mat. vii., latter end. His meaning and intention, reader, was to quicken thee and me to mind subjection to the word, without which we must perish. Suppose thou art never so great a hearer, yet if not a doer, thou deceivest thine own soul. Alas! what will become of the frequent hearer, when the *non-*, or negligent, doer shall be thrown to hell!

I have read a story of two men who, walking together, found a young tree laden with fruit; they both gathered and satisfied them-

selves at present; one of them took all the remaining fruit, and carried it away with him; the other took the tree, and planted it in his own ground, where it prospered, and brought forth fruit every year; so that though the former had more at present, yet this had some when he had none. They who hear the word, and have large memories, and nothing else, may carry away most of the word at present; yet he that, possibly, can remember little, who carrieth away the tree, plants the word in his heart, and obeys it in his life, shall have fruit when the other hath none. The practical memory is the greatest mercy.

It is reported of a good man, that coming from a lecture, and being demanded whether all were done, he should fetch a deep sigh, and say, All is said, but all is not done.

Reader, when thou hast heard the word, consider, though the sermon be at an end, yet there must not be an end of the sermon. Practice, which is the heart of hearing, is still behind. Observe the properties of those persons to whom, and their posterity, God will be propitious: 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting, and his righteousness to children's children; to such as keep his covenants, and remember his commandments to do them,' Ps. ciii. 17, 18. They are described by their act; they lay the word up, they 'remember his commandments;' and by their end, to lay the word out in their lives, 'to do them.' A good husband having received a bag of money, locketh it up safe, that none may rob him of it, and as occasion is, fetcheth it down and layeth it out, some for food, some for clothes, some for rent, some for servants' wages, some for this, some for that, as his necessities require; so, friend, do thou lay up the precious treasure of the word safe in the cabinet of thine heart, and bring it out as thy occasions call for it in thy life. Art thou in adversity? fetch out the promises for thy comfort; broach that strong liquor which was purposely tunned up for thee against a groaning hour: 'This is my comfort in mine affliction, for thy word hath quickened me,' Ps. cxix. 15. Art thou in prosperity? bring forth the precepts for thy carriage; look to that card and compass by which thou mayest sail evenly and trim, notwithstanding those high winds and swelling waters: 'Thy word is a light to my feet, and a lamp to my paths,' Ps. cxix. 4. Wouldst thou resist and conquer Satan's temptations? the word is a shield, which, as they say of Vulcan's armour, is full proof against all thrusts and darts: 'By the words of thy mouth I have kept myself from the paths of the destroyer,' Ps. xvii. 4. Nay, fetch but this sword of the Spirit out of God's armoury, and the devil will run

like a coward; he is more afraid of it than leviathan his namesake is afraid of the sword-fish, which some write he dreadeth more than all the fish in the ocean. Thy Saviour gave Satan such a wound with the sword of the word, that he feeleth it to this day. If thou wouldst overcome the world's insinuations, do but feed on the word, and thou wilt scorn the scraps of the world. As the Greeks in their sailing to fetch the golden fleece, when the sirens endeavoured to enchant them with their songs, found help against those assaults by hearkening to Orpheus's pipe; so when that harlot the world striveth to bewitch thee with her pleasant voice and poisonous breath, thereby to hinder thy pursuit of the golden crown of righteousness, do but hearken to those spiritual songs, that ravishing music, those high and noble delights which are in the gospel, and thou wilt find assured help. That thy corruptions within thee may be subdued, let still the word of God be consulted; thou mayest find in it such a bit and curb as will bridle thy youthful, most headstrong lusts: 'By what means may a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word,' Ps. cxix. 9. If thine evil humours be never so many and filthy, yet the word, like the *Catholicon* drug, is instead of all purges. That thy relative duties may be performed, the holy Scriptures must be fetched out and minded. Whether thou art a husband, or wife, or parent, or child, or master, or servant, to defray the charge of all those duties, thou mayest take enough out of the word of God. It is a well-drawn picture, that looks on all that look on it, and it guides thee by its eye how to order and govern thy feet, on what ground soever thou standest, whether on the higher ground of a superior, the plain, even ground of an equal, or the lower ground of an inferior. He that layeth up the word for these purposes, and bringeth it out in these practices, is the right profitable hearer; for he 'remembereth the commandments of God to do them.'

Some hear and jeer; they go to a sermon as to a stage-play, to laugh and be merry. Others hear and fret and fume, as those that live under the torrid zone curse the very sun. Others hear and forget what would do them most good; their memories are true to the flesh, but treacherous to the spirit; they are like vessels made of ivy, which, some say, if wine and water be poured into them, will leak out the wine and keep in the water. Others hear and admire; but, reader, if thou wouldst not have the word to witness against thee, when thou shalt be judged by it, for thine everlasting life or death, do thou hear and amend. Charles the Great did set his crown upon the Bible, intimating thereby that his crown, his

carriage as a king, should be according to the commands of the word. Oh, do thou hide this word in thine heart, that thou mayest hold it forth to thy companions by the hand of a holy conversation. Walk according to this rule.

A good wish about the word, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The holy Scriptures being of such authority, as the handwriting and heart of God himself, and so singular a mercy to me, that by the guidance of this star I am directed, as the wise men, to Jesus Christ, I wish in general that I may set a high price upon every part thereof, that every piece may be current with me, for his sake whose image and superscription it beareth. Oh that my carriage before, at, and after hearing, may witness to God and my conscience, that I esteem the law of his lips above thousands of gold and silver! In particular I wish that, as the Jews, when they went to hear the law, sanctified themselves, and washed their clothes; so, before I go to read or hear the word, I may sanctify my soul, and wash my heart from all superfluity of naughtiness, and with meekness receive that ingrafted word which is able to save my soul. I wish that, like Jehoshaphat, I may prefer one Micaiah before four hundred false prophets; yet that I may ever make a difference betwixt an evil minister's preaching and practice, and even when the minister is full of grace, may so distinguish between the treasure and the vessel, as not to value the message for the messenger's sake, but to bid the workman welcome for the word's sake. I wish that I may be so sensible of my own inability to profit by this holy ordinance, and of the speaker's impotency to preach home to my conscience, that I may cry mightily to my God, that he would open my heart to receive the word with all affection, and so direct the arrows which the preacher taketh out of the quiver of Scripture, that they may hit and pierce my dearest corruptions. I desire that the consideration of the word's excellency may cause me to prize it highly; of its necessity may make me to improve it diligently; and of its efficacy may move me to go to hear, as a prisoner going to a bar, to be tried for my everlasting life or death. I wish that the weight of the word may sink so deep into my heart, that I may never hear sermons to pick flowers of oratory, or to please my fancy, but to receive virtue from Christ, for the drying up of my issue of sin, and that I might cleanse my ways, by taking heed thereto

according to God's word; that the noise of the world may never hinder me from hearing the voice of my God. I wish that, when I come into the place of worship, I may set myself solemnly, as before the judge of quick and dead, and as in the presence of the Lord, with fear and awe, give audience to his word. If I were hearkening to an earthly prince I would be serious. Oh, with what reverence should I hear from the blessed and only potentate! Because without application the word will be unprofitable, I wish that I may never draw a curtain before my own picture, but overlooking others, may see my own face in the glass of the law. Oh, that by faith I may so take down the book of the word, as to be caught and taken by it! My prayer is, that the gospel may come to me, not in word only, but in power also; that I may go to it as clean paper for any inscription, as soft wax for any impression, which my God shall be pleased to make upon me. Oh that I might behold the Lord so effectually in that glass as to be changed into his image, from glory to glory! In special I wish that my sins may be placed by me in the front of this spiritual battle, as Uriah, purposely to be slain; and that those smooth stones which are taken out of the silver streams of the sanctuary may be thrown by so skilful and powerful a hand, that they may sink deep into the foreheads of those uncircumcised ones, to their death and destruction. I wish that after the seed is sown, I may beg that the showers of heaven's blessings may accompany it, that it may spring up in the fruits of righteousness, to the glory of my God, and good of my precious soul. And because the gospel is a dish which is not set on every table, though free grace bestoweth it on me, I wish that I may never rise from this spiritual food, before I have given thanks to the master of the feast. I desire, finally, that as I looked like a saint in hearing, I may live like a saint after I have heard; that those blossoms of good purposes, which sprouted forth while the minister was preaching, may ripen into practice; that whatsoever characters others are known by, to be Christians, I may be known by this ear-mark to be one of Christ's sheep, even by hearing his voice, so as to follow him wheresoever he goeth. Though others, like petty chapmen, deal only in some particular commodities, and those such as will serve their own turns, I desire that I may deal with the word by wholesale, and esteem all God's precepts concerning all things to be right. Oh that I might order my whole conversation aright, and at the last see the salvation of my God! Amen.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in receiving the Lord's supper; and, 1. *Of the nature of that ordinance, and preparation for it.*

When God had caused his everlasting decree to fall in labour, and had delivered it by giving the world a being, and upon infinite consultation had formed man to be his viceroy over all the works of his hands, he embarked him, with all abilities needful for such a voyage, in the bottom of the covenant of works. Adam set forth fully furnished with skill, and richly fraught with all the fortunes, hopes, and happiness of mankind; but he had scarce launched out of sight, before Satan, who knew very well the worth of the prize, envying man the haven of bliss to which he was sailing, and envying God, who was the owner, the honour of such a venture, raised a storm, whereby the vessel, through the unfaithfulness of Adam, the pilot, ran upon a rock and miscarried. Oh what a joyful spectacle was that to Satan! What a doleful sight to Adam, to behold himself, and all his posterity, sinking into the boundless, bottomless ocean of destruction and misery, through his falseness and treachery! when, lo, on a sudden the glorious God, out of the superabundant riches of his mercy, resolving that the devil should never rob him of the honour of that manifold wisdom, unsearchable goodness, and almighty power, which had been manifested in the work of creation, did provide and cast out the covenant of grace, a plank sufficient for his poor shipwrecked creature to swim safe to shore on.

As all the rivers meet in the sea, and all the lines in the centre, so do all the comforts of mankind meet in this covenant. The whole Scripture is 'sincere milk,' but this covenant is the cream of it: all our mercies are contained in it, all our hopes are sustained by it, and our heaven is at last attained through it.

The blessed God doth not only enter into a covenant of mercy, but out of compassion to our infirmities, hath been pleased to confirm it by his hand and seal: by his hand in his word, by his seals, by the privy-seal of his Spirit, and by the broad seals of the sacraments, that by these 'immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us,' Heb. vi. 18.

The Lord's supper is a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, or the covenant of grace, Rom. iv. 11.

When the blessed Saviour was taking a doleful farewell of an ungrateful world, as a lively resemblance of his sufferings for his, and as an undeniable evidence of his love to his, he instituted this supper: 1. As a lively resemblance of his passion for his people. A crucified Christ is the sum of the law, and the substance of the gospel; the knowledge of him is no less worth than eternal life. Now as he was crucified by the Jews and soldiers actually, and by unbelieving Gentiles, who live amongst us, interpretatively, so he is crucified in the gospel declaratively, and in the sacrament representatively. 'This cup,' saith Christ, 'is the New Testament in my blood,' 1 Cor. xi. 25. The Old Testament was sprinkled with the blood of beasts, but the New Testament with the blood of Christ, Heb. ix. 15, 19. This precious blood, which was the costly price of man's redemption, which is the only path to eternal salvation, which was promised to Adam, believed by the patriarchs, shadowed in the sacrifices, foretold by the prophets, and witnessed in the Scriptures, is drunk, received, signified, and sealed in the supper.

Christ instituted this ordinance also to be a standing evidence of his affection to his. 'The same night that he was betrayed he took bread.' The dearest Jesus kept his best wine till the last. He knew his disciples would be full of sorrow for his departure; he therefore provided his strongest cordial against their saddest fainting fits. After the passover he took bread and instituted the sacrament. After supper, then comes the banquet, the sweetmeats. At the Lord's table Christ kisseth his spouse with the sweetest kisses of his lips, and ravisheth her heart with his warmest love. In other ordinances he wooeth her; in this he marrieth her. In other ordinances she hath from him the salutes of a loving friend; but in this the embraces of a husband; other duties are pleasant and wholesome food, but this is the costly, delightful feast. In this Christ bringeth his beloved 'into his banqueting house,' a storehouse of all sweet delights, of variety of delicacies, 'and his banner over her is love,' Cant. ii. 4.

'A certain man made a great supper,' Luke xiv. 16. I may truly say so of the sacrament. This is a great supper in regard of its author: the great God is master of the feast. He gave his own Son for the life of the world. 2. In regard of the matter of it, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ; men set bread and wine on the table, but Christ setteth his own body and blood there. In this

ordinance, we eat not only, *Panem Domini, sed panem Dominum*, the bread of the Lord, but the bread which is the Lord. 'The gods,' say they, 'are come down in the likeness of man;' behold, here God the Son cometh down in the likeness of bread and wine; he himself is eaten and drunk by faith. Is not this a rare banquet? 3. In regard of the great price of it. Banquets are costly; but oh, what did this feast cost! Beasts are slain before they can be food for our bodies; but, lo, here the Lord of life was put to death, that he might be food for our starving souls. Cleopatra dissolved a pearl worth fifty thousand pounds in vinegar, and drank it up at a draught; but as costly as her liquor was, it was much worse than puddle water in comparison of the precious blood of Christ, which the believer drinketh at this great supper. 4. In regard of its great effects: it sealeth pardon, peace, and salvation to the saint; it conveyeth the image and love of God, nay, God himself into the soul; through the golden pipe of this ordinance is conveyed the golden oil of divine influence. There is manna indeed in this pot. Well may it be called a great supper. The elements are of small value, but the sacrament is of infinite worth. A conveyance of land fairly written in parchment, with wax fastened to it, is of little price, but when it is signed, sealed, and delivered to the use of a person, it may be worth much, it may convey thousands: a little bread, and a spoonful or two of wine, are in themselves of very small value; but when received according to Christ's institution, and accompanied with his benediction, they will be of unspeakable value; they will convey thousands and millions to the believer.

The Lord's supper is indeed like an elixir, which is small in quantity, but great in value and efficacy, having in it the spirits and substance of many excellent things; in prayer all the graces are exercised, and so also at the supper; but not only all the graces, but most of the other ordinances of God are invited to this feast. The word, prayer, singing, do all meet at the table, and contribute their help to carry the Christian up to heaven. I premise these things, reader, purposely to make thee more wary. The corrupting of the best is worst of all. Poison in wine is much worse than in water; kings expect that their children should be respected, though their officers be refused. 'Surely,' saith God, 'they will reverence my Son,' Mat. xxi. 37. The very work about which he comes will make him welcome. Though they refuse my servants, yet 'they will reverence my Son.' The casuists say, *Sacramentum et articulus mortis æquiparantur;* A man must be

looked upon at the sacramental board as if he were on a dying bed; friend, thou shouldst be as serious when thou art going to the Lord's supper, as if thou wert going into the other world.

He that cometh carelessly, gets nothing from Christ; it is one thing to *take* the supper of the Lord, and another thing to *taste* the supper of the Lord. 'Not one of them which were bidden shall taste of my supper,' Luke xiv. 24. Many crowd near a king's person on some days, when he sheweth himself in public, who never enjoy his gracious presence. Hundreds receive the elements, but few receive the sacrament.

If a beast did but touch the mount, when God solemnly appeared on it, it was to die. What, then, will become of thee if thou shouldst touch the table of the Lord with a brutish heart? If any did eat of the passover in his uncleanness, he was to be cut off from Israel, Exod. xii., which some interpret of a violent death by the hand of the magistrate; others, of a cutting off from the privileges of God's people on earth, and their possession in heaven. Surely it is as dangerous to eat the supper in thy pollution as the passover.

It is evil to dally with the jealous God in any duty; but worst of all in this, where the great affection of the Father in giving his Son, and the grievous passions of Christ, (to satisfy God's justice for sin,) the most serious things which man's heart can conceive, are represented. Melanchthon telleth a story of a tragedy which was acted of the death of Christ; but it proved a tragedy indeed at last, for he that acted Christ's part on the cross, being wounded to death, by one that should have thrust his sword through a bladder of blood, fell down, and with his fall killed one acting a woman's part, and lamenting under the cross. His brother, who was first slain, slew the murderer, for which himself was hanged by order of justice. Cyprian speaketh of an ancient woman, who had denied the faith, and yet ventured to this heavenly feast; but it proved her bane, for as soon as she had received the elements, she fell down dead. Oh it is sad jesting with the sufferings and ordinances of Christ! Friend, let others' woe be thy warning. Take example by others, lest God make thee an example to others.

I shall lay down two motives to quicken thee to a serious preparation for this ordinance:

1. Consider Christ's diligent inspection. The Lord Jesus will take special notice what respect thou hast for his body and blood. 'And when the king came in to see his guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment,' Mat. xxii. 11–13. Jesus

Christ observeth all his wedding guests, whether they come with the wedding-garment or no. Though there was but one, yet he could not lie hid, and escape in the crowd; the king quickly spied him.

The King of saints taketh exact notice in what manner thou comest to his supper; whether thou examinest thy regeneration, and provest thyself to be one of the family, before thou offerest to eat of their food; whether thou carriest the gold of thy graces to the touchstone of the Scripture, and triest their truth, before thou tenderest them to him for current coin. He observeth with what sense of thy misery thou runnest for refuge to the spring of mercy; he knoweth whether, when thou art going to this heavenly feast, thou hast the mouth of faith; with what resolution against sin for time to come thou goest for pardon of sins past. He seeth whether thou goest to this gospel ordinance in a gospel order; if not, both thy preparation for the sacrament, and thy carriage at it, and after it, are eye-services to Jesus Christ; how holy, therefore, shouldst thou be in them! Wouldst thou trample upon the picture of thy dear friend, or of thy lawful sovereign, before their faces? wilt thou tread under foot the infinitely precious blood of the Son of God, as if it were the blood of a malefactor, or of a dog, and that while he himself standeth by, and looketh on? Canst thou, friend, find in thine heart to offer such an abominable affront to thy best friend, and that before his face? Truly, if thou art not faithful in thy preparation for it, thou dost all this. Think with thyself, I am now to sit down at the table of the Lord, amongst his own children; I know beforehand that the King will come in to see his guests, even that King who is too just to be bribed, too great to be slighted, too wise to be deceived, and too good to be forfeited. O my soul, what solemn provision wilt thou make for so sacred a presence? If in any time of thy life thou wouldst be extraordinarily serious, this is the season. Oh let thy preparation be such for this glorious supper that the Master of the feast may see that thou art tender of his honour, watchful of his eye, and fearful of his anger!

2. Consider the dreadful condition of those that receive the Lord's supper unworthily. Their sin; they are 'guilty of the body and blood of the Lord:' their suffering; 'they eat and drink their own damnation,' 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29.

(1.) Their sin: they are 'guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.' The unworthy receiver is a Christ-murderer. He that tears the letters, or defaceth the picture, or clippeth the coin of a

prince, offereth the indignity to his person. The Romans, when they would dishonour a person, would disfigure the statue which was erected to his praise. The same wickedness of heart which carrieth a man out to profane the sacrament, would carry him out to kill the Saviour.

When one shoots at another to slay him, though he miss, he is a murderer; the error of the hand doth not wipe out the malice of the heart. Joseph's brethren were guilty concerning their brother, though they did not lay violent hands upon him, Gen. xlii. 21. When Julian shot darts up to heaven, his cruelty and rage were as bad as if he had hit Christ's body. Besides, men may be guilty of murder, by approving it after it is committed, Mat. xxiii. 35. What doth the unworthy receiver less than justify Judas and the Jews in all their treacherous and barbarous carriage towards Jesus Christ?

Consider, therefore, what thou dost, when thou goest unpreparedly to the Lord's table; thou art guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Simple murder is a crying sin: 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth,' Gen. iv. 10. It is one of those sins which will give God no rest till he take vengeance on the actor and author of it, and is therefore called a crying sin. The light of nature taught the barbarians that vengeance would not suffer a murderer to live, Acts xxviii. 4. The Scripture acquainteth us that 'no satisfaction shall be taken for the life of a murderer, for blood defileth the land,' Num. xxxv. 31, 36. But the murder of a superior is a far greater sin. Cicero telleth us, He that killeth his father committeth many sins in one; he killeth him that begot him and brought him up; he sinneth against many obligations. To kill a king is high treason: 'Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?' 1 Sam. xxvi. 9. But what is it to murder the Son of God? No tongue can tell, no pen can write the horrid, heinous nature of Christ-murder. He is thy everlasting Father. It made a dumb child speak to see another stabbing his father, and wilt thou imbrue thine own hands in thy Father's blood? Jesus Christ is thy king, and wilt thou stretch forth thy hands against thy Head, thy Sovereign? 'Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?' Nay, Jesus Christ is thy Redeemer, and wilt thou put him to death who is the author of thy life? He gave thee thy being, and wouldst thou deprive him of his being? He is the only physician that can cure thee, and wilt thou kill him? Once more, Jesus Christ is God, and wilt thou lift up thy hand (I would say a

thought) against the blessed God? God deserveth infinitely more love than thou canst possibly give, and shall thine heart be so full of hatred as to let fly against the God of heaven? Oh, say with David, when Abishai persuaded him to slay Saul, 'The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed!' When Satan, or thy own heart, would persuade thee to be slight in the examination of thyself, and formal in thy humiliation for sin, that thou mightest be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, let conscience cry out, God forbid that I should stretch out my hand against Jesus Christ, the Lord's anointed; and truly, friend, if after such warning as God gives thee in this head, thou shouldst dare to receive unworthily, thou wouldst find it hereafter to thine unspeakable hurt, as Reuben told his brethren when they were in distress, 'Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child? and ye would not hear, therefore behold his blood is required,' Gen. xlii. 22. So, if thou now darest to approach the Lord's table in thy sinful, unregenerate estate, in thy filth and pollution, when thou comest to lie under some smart rod, or on thy dying bed, or at least in the other world, conscience will fly in thy face, Did I not speak unto thee, saying, Do not sin against the holy child Jesus, and thou wouldst not hear? therefore behold his blood is required at thy hands! O friend, friend! what wilt thou do in such an hour? If on him who slew Cain vengeance should be taken sevenfold, what vengeance shall be taken on him who slayeth Jesus Christ? How dreadful will thy perdition be if the only Saviour be thine accuser, and that blood which alone can procure thy pardon shall cry for thine eternal punishment!

Oh think of it seriously, hast thou never had hard thoughts of the Jews for their cruelty to the Son of God? and wilt thou do worse thyself? The Jews crucified him but once, but thou, by continuing an unworthy receiver, crucifiest him often. The Jews did it ignorantly; 'Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,' 1 Cor. ii. 8; but thou knowest him to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. They crucified him in his estate of humiliation, but thou in his estate of exaltation; they had not thee for a warning when they put him to death, but thou hast them for a warning to thee; they crucified him when he was to rise again the third day, but thou so crucifiest him that he might never rise more, were it in thy power. Oh take heed what thou dost, and be not worse than a Jew!

(2.) Thy suffering; 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, tateth and drinketh damnation to himself,' 1 Cor. xi. 29. Some I

know are offended at the translation of the Greek word *κρίμα*, damnation, but I see little reason for it; for damnation is the end of every sin, though it be not the end of every sinner. Paul speaketh of believers indeed; but as it may be truly said of one that drinketh poison, such a man drank his bane, though by the help of a physician such an antidote may be given as may prevent the patient's death; so it may be truly spoken of a believer who receiveth unworthily, he eateth and drinketh his own damnation, though, through the grace and help of Jesus Christ, no thank to himself, he is recovered out of that sin, and saved. Beza and the Geneva translation take it in this sense. So the word is taken, John iii. 17, 18; Rom. iii. 8, and in several other places.

Now what an argument is here to dissuade thee from going rashly or unpreparedly to the table of the Lord. That which is a worthy receiver's meat will be thy poison; the same red sea of Christ's blood, which is salvation to others—they pass safely through it into the land of promise—will be damnation to thee. King John, as our English chroniclers write, was poisoned by a cup of wine.[1] The Emperor Henry VII. was poisoned by the bread in the sacrament, through the treachery and treason of a monk. The Israelites 'did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; but with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness,' 1 Cor. x. 3–5. Those that eat and drink in Christ's presence were punished with everlasting perdition, Mat. vii. 23. And do not please thyself because thou feelest no such poisonous operation at present in unworthy receiving, that therefore thou needest not fear it. They that eat Italian figs carry their death about them, though they fall not down dead suddenly.

Therefore, reader, take some time and pains to commune with thy own heart before thou goest to the sacrament. Charge it upon its allegiance to God to hear thee patiently, and to carry itself suitably. If I receive this supper with a holy preparation, it will be a seal of, and a help to, my eternal salvation; it will be an earnest of matchless love, and an entrance into an endless, happy life. But if I eat and drink unworthily, there is death in the pot, death in the cup; I eat and drink my own damnation. Oh how doleful is that one word *damnation!* What a dreadful sound doth it make in mine ears! What fearful sighs doth it cause in my soul! Damnation is no trifling business; God threateneth it in earnest, the damned feel it in earnest, and shall I jest with it?

[1] Speed; Simps., Eccles. Hist.

Surely I were better eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of adversity, than eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily. Canst thou be so bloody as to stab thyself and thy Redeemer to the heart with one blow? O my soul, bestir thyself, awake out of sleep, and do not dally about the concernments of eternal life and death; let thy care and conscience be such, in fitting thyself for this sacred ordinance, that thy Saviour may see thou hast a high respect for his precious blood, and a tender regard to thine own everlasting good.

For thy help about this ordinance I shall speak,

1. To thy duty before the sacrament.
2. To thy duty at the sacrament.
3. To thy duty after the sacrament.

First, To thy duty before the sacrament; and herein my counsel is, that thou wouldst prepare thyself solemnly for this ordinance. The Jews had their preparation for their passover, John xix. 24. 'It was the preparation of the passover.' Nay, they took their lamb the tenth day of the month, and did not kill it till the fourteenth, Exod. xii. 3; and, as some of their writers observe, they tied it all the while to their bedposts, that in the interim they might prepare themselves for it. Our Lord Jesus, when he was to eat the passover, and institute the supper, would have so much as the house in which he would do it prepared beforehand, Mark xiv. 15. The ancient fathers and primitive Christians used to sit up whole nights at prayer before the Lord's supper, which they called their *vigiliæ*.

Reader, thy care must be to trim thy lamp, and make sure of oil in the vessel, now thou art going to meet the bridegroom. Samuel spake to the inhabitants of Bethlehem, 'Sanctify yourselves, and come to the sacrifice;' so say I to thee, Sanctify thy soul, and then come to the sacrament, 1 Sam. xvi. 9. Joseph prepared himself, by shaving himself, and changing his raiment, before he went unto Pharaoh; and wilt not thou prepare thyself by putting thy soul into the holiest posture thou canst, when thou art to go in unto the king of heaven and earth? He that would make a good meal, even when he is to feast at another's cost, must prepare his stomach beforehand by moderate fasting or exercise. God expecteth that the hands be pure, but especially that the heart be prepared. 'The good Lord,' saith Hezekiah, 'pardon every one that prepareth his heart, though it be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary,' 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. The king speaketh of those who came to the pass-

over with some ceremonial pollution, yet had moral purity; and his words are to this purpose: Lord, though several of my people have failed in regard of external purification, let it please thee to pardon them, if they have minded internal preparation. Friend, there is no hope of remission without this heart preparation; the devil himself would not come into a house till it was 'ready, swept, and garnished,' Mat. xii. And dost thou think that Jesus Christ will come into thy heart while it lieth nastily and sluttishly, before the filth of sin be swept out, and it be garnished with the graces of his Spirit? Surely that room had need be richly hung with the embroidery of the Spirit, in which the glorious and blessed potentate will sup and lodge. Where thy expectation is great from a person, there thy preparation must be great for him. Dost thou not look, like Herod, to see some miracle done by Jesus, some extraordinary thing for thy soul? Therefore I say to thee, as Joshua spake to the Israelites, 'Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders amongst you,' Joshua iii. 5. Oh sanctify thyself, and to-morrow—on the sacrament day—the Lord will do wonders for thee; he will feast thee at his own table, he will feed thee with his own flesh, he will give thee that love which is better than wine, he will embrace thee in his arms, and kiss thee with the kisses of his mouth; he will delight thine eyes with the sight of his beautiful person, ravish thine ears with the sound of his precious promises, and rejoice thine heart with the assurance of his gracious pardon. Oh do but sanctify thyself, and to-morrow the Lord will do wonders for thee! This preparation consisteth in a serious examination of thyself, and a sincere humiliation for thy sins.

Thy serious examination of thyself must be, first, Of the good in thee; secondly, Of the evil done by thee.

'Let a man examine himself, and so' (and no otherwise) 'let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup,' 1 Cor. xi. 28. Examine himself, *δοκιμαζέτω*: some take it to be a metaphor of a goldsmith, as he trieth gold in the fire whether it be pure or no; so thy duty is to try thy graces by the fire of the word, whether they be true or not. So the word is used, 1 Peter i. 7. Others take it as an allusion to ministers, who are tried whether they are fit for their office or no, 1 Tim. iii. 10; so thou oughtest to try thyself, whether thou art fit for this ordinance or no. This examination must be,

First, Of the good in thee. Thy duty is to examine thyself in general, concerning thy regeneration or spiritual life. The sacra-

ment is children's bread, and it must not be given to dogs; dogs must be without doors, not within, snatching the meat from the table. Men must prove their right to the purchase before they take possession. He must have an interest in the covenant of grace who will finger the seal of the covenant. It is high treason to annex the king's broad seal to forged writings.

'Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies,' Cant. vii. 2. The words are Christ's praise of his spouse, for her fruitfulness in bringing children forth, and her faithfulness in bringing them up. By the *navel* expositors agree that baptism is understood, by which, as children by the navel, the members of the church are nourished, even then when they are so feeble that they cannot feed themselves, but their whole sustenance is conveyed to them by others. By the *belly* is meant the Lord's supper; now observe the provision how the table is furnished, and the persons which are to sit at it. For the provision; 'Thy belly is like an heap of wheat.' Ainsworth on the words observeth, that in those times they brought their corn in and stacked it up in heaps; so that as the belly distributeth to every part of the body its proportion of nourishment, and as a heap of wheat satisfieth the hunger of, and affordeth strength to a whole family, so doth the church by this sacrament bestow on all her children, through Christ, that food which is needful for health and strength. The persons which are to eat of this wheat 'set about with lilies;' they must be saints, and are compared to lilies, first, For their innocency, they are lily-white; secondly, For their glory and nobility, Mat. vi. 29. Pliny telleth us that lilies are next to the rose for nobility;[1] Christ is 'the rose of Sharon,' the 'plant of most renown;' but his church is next to him. Thirdly, For the savour, Cant. iv. 12. The graces of believers are like sweet perfumes, and scented as far as heaven. The Lord's supper is a sacrament, not of regeneration, but of sustentation. When the prodigal came to himself, then the fatted calf was killed for him, Luke xv. Men must have natural life, before they can eat natural meat; and men must have spiritual life, before they can eat spiritual meat. It was an ancient abuse of the sacrament, cast out by the Carthaginian council, to give it to dead men. The invitation is not to enemies but friends: 'Eat, O friends; drink abundantly, O beloved,' Cant. v. 1. The water of life is only for the thirsty, and the bread of life only for the hungry. The shew-bread under the law was to be eaten only by the priests, Lev.

[1] Plin., lib. xxii. cap. 5.

xxiv. 9; so the bread of the sacrament is to be eaten only by such as are spiritual priests unto God, as saints are, Rev. i. 5.

Reader, examine thyself therefore whether thou art born again or no. Look into the word of God, and compare thyself with the characters which are there given of new born creatures. They are sometimes described by their hearts: 'God is good to Israel, to such as are of a clean heart,' Ps. lxxiii. 1. Their hearts are clean, not with a legal cleanness, which denieth the being of sin in them—in that sense 'none can say, I have made my heart clean,' (this spotless robe is reserved for the saints' wearing in the other world;) but with an evangelical cleanness, which denieth the dominion of sin over them, (this cleanly garment is the saint's ordinary attire in this world.) We call river water clean water, though there be some kind of illness and impurity in it, because it will not, like pond water, mingle with it, and suffer the filth to rest there, but worketh it out, and sendeth it forth in its scum and froth. Now, how is it with thee, friend? Doth sin rest quietly in thee? or is it resisted by thee? Dost thou love sin or loathe sin? Dost thou count it thy pleasure or thy poison? When the body is dead, vermin crawl in it without opposition. When the soul is dead, lusts abound in it and reign without any considerable disturbance. An unclean heart is quickly overcome by sin. As when a chimney is foul, it is apt to be fired by every spark that flieth up; whereas, when it is clean, though many fly up, it remaineth safe. So when the heart is unclean, Satan can no sooner throw in his fiery darts, but presently it is in a flame; whereas a clean heart is like wet tinder, not so soon burning when he strikes fire. Godly men, as they have clean hearts, so they have 'clean hands,' Job xvii. 9. The hand is the instrument of action; by clean hands the Spirit of God meaneth clean and holy actings.

Saints are described by their lives. They 'walk after the Spirit;' they 'order their conversations aright.' *Per brachium fit judicium de corde*, was Galen's rule. Physicians feel the pulse of the arm, that they may know the state of the vitals. Now, how beats the pulse of thy conversation? according to that, judge of the soundness or sickness of thy constitution. Dost thou walk, in reference to thyself, soberly, in reference to others, righteously, in reference to God, religiously? Rom. viii. 1, 5; Titus ii. 12.

Thy duty is to examine thyself in particular also of those graces which are specially requisite in a communicant, of thy knowledge to discern the Lord's body. There is a competency of knowledge needful if thou wouldst receive acceptably. Dost thou know the

threefold estate of man?—his innocency, apostasy, and recovery; what a pure piece he was, how holy, when he came out of God's hands; what a miserable polluted creature he hath made himself by disobeying God, and hearkening to the tempter; what a glorious remedy God hath provided to restore man to his primitive purity. Dost thou know God as he discovereth himself in his works, but especially as he is represented in the glass of his word? Dost thou know Jesus Christ, his two natures, his three offices, how he executeth them, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation? Dost thou know the nature and end of the Lord's supper?

An ignorant person can no more discern Christ's body than a person stark blind can discern the bread. God hath expressly forbidden lame and blind sacrifices, Mal. i. 8. The hypocrite's sacrifice is lame, for he halteth in God's way. The ignorant person's sacrifice is blind, for he can give no account of his own work. When the leprosy was in the head, the priest was to pronounce the party 'utterly unclean,' and exclude him the camp, Lev. xiii. 44. Do not say, though thou art ignorant, yet thy heart is good, when God himself saith, 'Without knowledge the mind is not good.'

Fish stink first in the head, and then the whole body putrifieth.

Examine thy faith. This grace is thy spiritual taste, without which thou canst relish nothing on the table. This is the bucket, and if it be wanting, I may say to thee, as the woman to Christ, 'The well is deep, and thou hast nothing to draw with.' This is the hand to receive Christ, John i. 12. This is as the arms whereby we embrace Christ; they 'embraced the promises' by faith, Heb. xi. 13. As loving friends that have been a great while asunder, when they meet together, hug and embrace each other in their arms; so the Christian who longeth to see Jesus Christ in the promises, when at a sacrament he meeteth him, huggeth and embraceth him in the arms of faith.

Examine not so much the strength as the truth of thy faith. The wings of a dove may help her to mount up towards heaven, as well as the wings of an eagle. Try whether thy faith be unfeigned, 1 Tim. i. 5. What price dost thou set upon Christ? 'To them that believe, Christ is precious,' 1 Pet. ii. 7. An unbeliever, like the Indians, seeth no worth in this golden mine, but preferreth a piece of glass, or a few painted beads, mean, earthly things, before it; but a believer, like the Spaniard, knoweth the value of it, and will venture through all storms and tempests that he may enjoy it. Dost thou prize the precepts of Christ, the promises of Christ, the

people of Christ, the person of Christ, (is that altogether lovely in thine eyes?) and the passion of Christ? Is thy greatest glory in Christ's shameful cross? Dost thou esteem it above the highest emperor's most glorious crown? One of England's kings bestowed as much on a crucifix as the revenues of his crown were worth in a year. 'God forbid,' saith Paul, 'that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ,' Gal. vi. 14.

Doth thy faith purify thine heart? 'Having their hearts purified by faith, Acts xv. 9. The hand of faith, which openeth the door to let Christ into the heart, sweepeth the heart clean. Faith looks to be like Christ in glory, and faith labours to resemble Christ in grace. An unbeliever, like a sluttish woman, though he keep the room of his life a little clean, which others daily observe, yet he cares not how dirtily those rooms of his inward man lie, which are out of their sight; *unbelieving* and *defiled* are joined together, Tit. i. 15.

Examine thy love. The primitive Christians kissed each other at the supper, which they called *Osculum pacis*, A kiss of peace. They had their 'feasts of charity,' Jude 12. 'The bread which we eat, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' As the bread is made of many grains, and the cup of wine of many grapes united, so is the body of Christ of many members, united under one head. Eating together was ever a sign of love and friendship. Joseph hereby shewed his love to his brethren. The sons of Brutus, and the Vitellii, when they conspired with Tarquin's ambassadors against the consul, drank the blood of a man together, to confirm their amity.[1] Even beasts have been brought to agree by feeding at the same rack.

Now, reader, what love-fire hast thou for this love-feast?

Dost thou love the brethren as brethren, because they are related to God, and because they have the image of God? Or dost thou love them only for the natural qualities in them, and their courtesy to thee? This fire I must tell thee is kitchen fire, which must be fed with such coarse fuel; the former only is the fire which is taken from God's altar. Dost thou love Christ in a cottage as well as in a court? Dost thou love a poor as well as a rich Christian? Dost thou love grace in rags as much as grace in robes? Is it their honour or their holiness which thou dost admire?

As thy duty is to examine thyself concerning thy graces, so also concerning thy corruptions. Before a sacrament there should be a thorough search for all thy sins. The Jews, before their passover,

[1] Plutarch in Vita Publica.

searched all over their houses for leaven; nay, they searched every corner and mouse-hole with a wax candle, as some write. There is a threefold leaven: First, A leaven of hypocrisy; 'Beware of the leaven of the pharisees, which is hypocrisy,' Luke xii. 1. Secondly, A leaven of heresy; 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' Gal. v. 9. Thirdly, A leaven of enormity or scandal; 'Purge out the old leaven,' 1 Cor. v. 7. Thy care must be to make a diligent inquiry for all this leaven. The iniquities of wicked men will find them out, but good men will find out their iniquities: 'I know mine iniquities,' saith David, Ps. li. When evil humours lie hid in the body, they hinder the strength it might get by food; when sins lie undiscovered in the soul, they will hinder its digesting spiritual meat and drink.

At a sessions there are some indictments read, and it may be some execution done; but at an assize there are many malefactors arraigned and many executed, the jail is then cleared of those vermin. A Christian should keep a petty sessions in his heart every day,—do what he can for the conviction and condemnation of his sins;—but before a sacrament he must keep an assize; there must be a general jail-delivery; all his sins must be sought after, indicted, and executed; the room of his heart must be cleared of those vipers. Particularly examine thyself of thy sins since the last sacrament; how forgetful thou hast been of the oath of the Lord which thou didst then enter into. Be not slight or formal in searching after thy sins, like some officers that willingly overlook the thieves they search for; but be as diligent to find them out as thou wouldst be to find out the murderers of thy father or best friend.

But be sure thou compare thy heart and life with the law of God. Oh how many spots will that glass discover! When the woman hath swept her house and gathered the dust up altogether, she thinks there is none left; but when the sun doth but shine in through some broken pane of glass, she seeth the whole house swarm with innumerable motes of dust floating to and fro in the air. The light of God's law will make innumerable sins visible to thee, which without it will lie hid.

2. There is requisite, as a serious examination of thyself, so also sincere humiliation for thy sins. The cleanly dame is careful always to keep her pewter and brass clean; but against a good time she is very curious to have her vessels not only clean, but bright, and for this end she will not only wash them, but take much pains in scouring them. Christian, now is the good time

before which thou shouldst scour the vessel of thy heart, that no dirt if possible may stick to it. This true humiliation consisteth partly in mourning for sin, partly in turning from sin.

1. In mourning for sin. The pharisees would not eat their common bread 'with unwashed hands,' lest they should transgress the traditions of their elders. Friend, if thou shouldst eat this sacred bread with an unwashed heart, thou wilt horribly transgress the commandment of thy God. The Jews did eat the passover with bitter herbs, and truly we Gentiles must eat a broken body with broken bones. The more bitter sin is to thee before, the more sweet thy Saviour will be to thee at, the sacrament; 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,' Mat. v. 3. A wet seed-time will bring a sunshiny and plentiful harvest. One of the fathers observeth that David, the greatest mourner in Israel, was the sweetest singer in Israel. Beans thrive best if steeped in water before they be sown, and truly so will thy soul if steeped in godly sorrow before thou goest to the sacrament. 'Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that are of heavy hearts,' Prov. xxxi. 6. When thy heart is heavy under the sense of thine unholiness, and thou art ready to perish under the weight of thy wickedness, then Jesus Christ will give thee that wine, that blood which will refresh and make thine heart glad.

Those trees shoot highest in summer that shoot lowest into the earth in winter. No Christian usually riseth so high in consolation as he that is cast down lowest in evangelical humiliation. There are two in the New Testament famous for their contrition, and they are famous for God's respect and affection to them. Mary was a great mourner; we seldom have a view of her in Scripture without dew on her face and tears in her eyes, Luke vii. 38, 39, and xxiii. 27, 28; John xix. 25, and xx. 11, 15. But she had the special honour and favour of seeing the best sight which ever mortal eyes beheld before all others, even the blessed Redeemer in the first step of his exaltation: 'Now when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils,' Mark xvi. 9. Mary had sinned greatly and sorrowed greatly, and was upon it greatly respected by God. Peter wept bitterly. A look from love broke his heart in pieces; but Christ took special care to bind up this broken heart, to pour oil into his wounded conscience; and therefore when a messenger is despatched from heaven to acquaint the world with the joyful news of the Saviour's resurrection, no name is particularly mentioned in his commission but Peter's. God gives him an express com-

mand, that whosoever should remain ignorant of those happy tidings, he should be sure that Peter have notice of it. 'Go your way,' saith the angel, 'tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him.' When a king hath some extraordinary good news, and sendeth a courtier to acquaint his intimate friends with it, but chargeth him, Tell them all of it, but be sure such an earl have notice of it: whoever you forget, remember him;—all will conclude this is the favourite. Peter thought that, because he had forsworn Christ, therefore Christ might justly forget him; but Christ took such care, that if but one in the world, besides those two women at the sepulchre, had notice of his resurrection, penitent Peter should be the man. Oh the rhetoric, the power of an unfeigned tear! Repentance hath more prevalency with the blessed God than all the robes, riches, crowns and diadems of the greatest potentates in the world.

O reader, if thou wouldst have heavenly music at the feast, mind this holy mourning! When Joseph's brethren were sensible of their sin in selling him, then, and not till then, he made them a feast. Jesus Christ made the best wine that ever was of water. The bee, naturalists tell us, gathers the best honey of the bitterest herb; God hath solid joy for the broken bones, the contrite spirit. Cast up the accounts betwixt God and thy soul, see how infinitely thou art indebted to his Majesty. Abhor thyself with Job, bemoan thyself with Ephraim, and judge thyself, as Paul enjoineth his Corinthians in relation to this ordinance, as ever thou wouldst have God at the sacrament to seal thee a general acquittance.

Sacrament days are sealing days; God doth then seal his love, and stamp his image more fairly on the soul; now, if thy heart be melted into godly sorrow, and made thereby like soft wax, thou wilt be fit for this seal and stamp. The hart in grazing kills and eats a serpent, which so inflames her that she can have no rest till she drink of the water-brooks. Repentance will make thee feel the scorching nature of that serpent sin, and thereby long for and relish the water of life.

2. There must be a turning from sin. Thou canst never communicate with true comfort if thou dost not communicate with a clear conscience. The Mohammedans, before they enter into their temples, wash their feet, and when they are entering in, put off their shoes.[1] As thy duty is to wash thy soul in godly sorrow, so also to put off thy sinful affections, before thou enterest into God's house to partake of this ordinance. If God takes it ill when men

[1] Purch. Pilgrim., vol. ii. p. 1477.

'take his name into their mouths,' who 'hate to be reformed,' how ill will he take it if such take the body and blood of his Son into their mouths? Christ's body was not to see corruption, neither will it mingle with corruption. He lay in a new womb, in a new tomb, and he will lie in a new heart. When sin is cast out, then Jesus Christ will enter into thy soul. 'Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.' But mark how they must prepare themselves who would approach the Lord: 'Cleanse your hearts, ye sinners, and purify your hands, ye double-minded,' James iv. 8, 9.

The Jews before the passover cleansed all their vessels, which they feared might have leaven sticking to them, burned all the leaven they could find, and cursed all in their houses, whether found or not found; as their antiquaries inform us. Truly, when thou goest to the supper it concerneth thee to cleanse thy soul of the leaven of sin, by a high indignation at it, and hearty resolution against it. 'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump. For Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth,' 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Reader, it would be a trampling under foot the blood of Christ, and counting it as an unholy thing, if thou shouldst go to the table of the Lord with love to any lust. For the Lord's sake, and for thy soul's sake, take heed of paddling in the blood of Christ, as if it were channel water. Alas! thou dost little less if thou partakest of the sacrament without anger and indignation against every sin. True repentance implieth an aversion from sin: 'If they shall humble themselves, and turn from their evil ways,' 2 Chron. vii. 14. The burnt child will dread the fire. The man that hath smarted for suretyship will by no means be persuaded to come again into bonds; urge him to it never so much, he will tell you he hath paid dear for it, and therefore you must excuse him; he is resolved, nay, hath vowed against it, and though he be never so much entreated, is still inexorable. The Christian who hath truly repented is so sensible of the weight of sin and wrath of God, that he is resolved never more to meddle with those burning coals; alas! they are too heavy for him. David, that had repented of his sin, would not drink of that water which had but been the occasion of hazarding men's lives, though before he could drink the blood of Uriah. Penitent Peter, though before he was so full of self-confidence that he preferred himself before the other apostles,—'Though all deny thee, yet will not I,'—yet afterwards, though occasion were offered him of commending him-

self, forbears it: 'Peter, lovest thou me more than these? Lord, thou knowest I love thee.' He saith not, *more than these.* O reader, it was Esau's expression, 'The days of mourning for my father are coming, and then I will slay my brother Jacob:' so say thou, The days of mourning for the death of my dear Saviour and everlasting Father are come, and now I will slay my most beloved lusts; now will I be revenged of them for their endeavour to rob me of my spiritual birthright, to wrong me of my eternal blessing.

This repentance exercised before the sacrament would prepare thy stomach for the feast, it would cleanse it, and cause it to savour the dainties there; it would make thee hungry, and hunger is the best sauce. Artaxerxes, flying for his life, fed on barley bread and a few dried figs, and said it was the best meal that ever he made.

When thou hast thus prepared thy stomach for this heavenly banquet, take heed of relying upon thy pains and preparation, either for a right performance of the duty, or for thine acceptance in the ordinance. Many a poor creature, I am persuaded, goeth with much humiliation for sin, and cometh away without any consolation, because they made a saviour of their sorrow. Praise thy physician if he have made thee sensible of thy sickness, but do not provoke him by making thy pain to be the plaster for thy cure. Alas! thy preparation itself needeth much pardon; if God should deal strictly with thee, thy prayers should be found dung, thy sighs unsavoury breath, thy very tears puddle water. Reflect on them thyself, and compare them with the law of God, and thou wilt find cause to pray over thy prayers, to weep over thy tears, to be ashamed of thy shame, and to abhor thyself for thy self-abhorrency.

Do not think with thyself, I have examined my heart faithfully, and find that I do not come short of the grace of God; I have acknowledged mine iniquities, and been sorrowful for my sins, and therefore I cannot miscarry at this sacrament. Such a trusting of thyself would be a tempting of thy Saviour, and would certainly hinder the success of the sacrament: it would be to thee as the cutting off Samson's locks was to him: Judges xvi. 20, 'He thought to have gone forth as at other times, and shake himself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.' Thou mayest think, after such self-confidence, to go to the Lord's supper as at other times; but, alas! what wilt thou do? for the Lord will depart from thee, and then what sport will Satan and sin, those uncircumcised ones, make with thee?

Reader, let me persuade thee, when thou hast been diligent in the trial of thy spiritual estate, and hast with many tears bewailed the pollution of thy nature and transgressions of thy life, to cast thyself wholly upon Jesus Christ for assistance in the duty. As Jehoshaphat, when he had fifty thousand men ready armed for the battle, cried out, 'O Lord our God, we have no might against this great company, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 6. So after thou hast made the greatest preparation possible, as believing the weight and worth of the supper, the purity and majesty of the master of the feast, do thou look up to Christ, and say, Lord, I have no ability, no might, for this great supper, for a right performance of this great ordinance, neither know I what to do, but mine eyes are unto thee. When Asa had an army of two hundred and fourscore thousand men of valour to fight with the Ethiopians, he prayeth and trusteth to God as if he had not one man: 'Lord, it is nothing for thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this great multitude,' 2 Chron. xiv. 11. So do thou say, Lord, I have no power for this holy supper; help me, O Lord my God, for I rest on thee, and in thy name I go to this great and weighty ordinance. Truly couldst thou, after all the provision thou hast made, disclaim it wholly in regard of dependence, and cast thyself on Christ for assistance; I durst be the prophet to foretel a good day. The gaudy flower, which standeth upon its own stalk, doth quickly wither; when the plain ivy, that depends upon the house, and leans on it, is fresh and green all the year. He that trusteth to his own legs in this duty is as sure to fall as if he were down already. The weak child walketh safest, that all the way holdeth by and hangeth upon its parent.

If thou wert now going to receive, be advised to write after David's copy; he looked up to God both for assistance and acceptance: 'I will go in the strength of the Lord: I will make mention of thy righteousness, yea, of thine only,' Ps. lxxi. 16. Let thy practice be suitable to his when thou goest out of thy house; and let thy prayer be the same as the spouse's when thou art entering into God's house. Oh then look up to heaven, and cry mightily, 'Awake, thou north wind; and come, O south: blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits,' Cant. iv. 16.

CHAPTER XIX.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness at the table.

I come to the second particular about the Lord's supper, and that is thy behaviour at the table, or in the time of receiving; in reference to which I would advise thee: 1. To mind the suitable subjects which are to be considered at it; 2. To observe the special graces which are to be exercised in it. There are three principal subjects of meditation, when thou approachest the table, in order to the three graces which must then be acted. The subjects of meditation are Christ's passion, his affection, and thy own corruptions. The three graces are faith, love, and godly sorrow. Christ's death is sure footing for faith. Paul never desired better, 1 Cor. ii. 2; it is not only an 'elect and precious,' but 'a tried stone, and a sure foundation, on which, whosoever believeth, shall never be confounded,' Isa. xxviii. 16. Faith picks excellent food from this heavenly carcase. The love of Christ displayed in his death causeth and calleth forth the love of a Christian. Faith bringeth the soul, that is like a dead coal, near to the live coals of God's burning love in giving his only Son, and Christ's burning love in giving himself; and by these it is turned into fire, all in a flame of love: as the echo answereth the voice, it returneth the love it receiveth. Our own sins meditated on stir up the third grace, which is godly sorrow; though, indeed, this liquor will run from any of the three vessels if they be but pierced. When Christ hung upon the cross under the weight of God's wrath, water came out of his sides as well as blood. Who can think of his sufferings without sorrow? and of his blood without tears? His love in its heat may well thaw the most frozen spirit; but sin, the cause of his sufferings, will, like a knife, cut and prick to the heart indeed. But,

First, I begin with the subjects of meditation, and among them, in the first place, with the passion of Christ.

First, Meditate now on the sufferings of thy Saviour. The wounds of Christ, out of which came precious balsam to heal all thy sinful sores, ought never to be forgotten; but the remembrance of them is never so seasonable as at a sacrament. One end of the institution of this ordinance was the commemoration of Christ's death: 'As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shew forth the Lord's death till he come,' 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27. The sacra-

ment is a lively crucifix, wherein 'Jesus Christ is evidently set forth crucified before thine eyes.' When thou seest the bread and wine consecrated and set apart, consider how God the Father did from eternity set apart his only Son for his bloody passion, and thy blessed redemption. Consider he was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. When thou seest the bread and wine upon the table, consider that, as the corn was ground in the mill to make that bread, and the grapes squeezed to make that wine, so thy Saviour was beaten in the mill and wine-press of his Father's wrath before he could be meat indeed and drink indeed to nourish thee unto life everlasting. When thou seest the bread broken in pieces, think how the body of Christ was broken for thine iniquities. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him,' (as spice is beaten small in a mortar with a pestle—so the word signifieth,) Isa. liii. 10. Well might he cry out, 'I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart,' Ps. xxxviii. 8. When thou seest the wine poured out, meditate on his precious blood, which was 'shed for many, for the remission of sins.' Oh, consider his wounds and his words, 'I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels,' Ps. xxii. 14. Consider the doleful tragedy which he acted from first to last; meditate on his incarnation. For the Son of God to become the Son of man; for him that lived from all eternity to be born in time; for him that thundereth in the clouds to cry in the cradle; for him that created all things to become a creature,—is a greater suffering than if all the men and angels in this and the other world were crowded into an atom, or turned into nothing. This was the first and greatest step of his humiliation. Consider the manner of his birth: he was born, not of some great princes, but of mean and indigent parents; not in a royal palace, but in a place where beggars and beasts are entertained—a stable; he was no sooner born but sought after to be butchered. He fled for his life in his very swaddling-clouts, and was an early martyr indeed. When he grew up, though he was of ability to have swayed the sceptre of all the empires in the world, to have instructed the greatest potentates and counsellors in the mysteries of wisdom and knowledge; though to him Adam and Solomon, yea, and angels themselves, were fools, yet he lived privately with his supposed father many years, and suffered his deity to be hid, as light in a dark lantern, near thirty years, save that once it darted a little out, when at twelve years of age he disputed and confuted the great Rabbis of the Jews, Luke ii. 46.

When he entered upon his public ministry, he is no sooner ascended the stage, but all the devils in hell appear against him, and he is forced to fight hand to hand with them for forty days together; and when they left him they did not take their leave, but 'departed only for a season,' Luke iv. 13. His whole life was a living death. How poor was he, when he was fain to work a miracle to pay his tax! 'The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests; but the Son of man had not where to lay his head,' though he were 'heir of all things,' Mat. viii. 20. What did he suffer in his name when the worst words in the mouths of the Jews were thought not bad enough for him! He is called the carpenter's son, a glutton, a drunkard, a blasphemer, a friend of publicans and sinners, a Samaritan, a devil; nay, the prince of devils. What hunger and thirst and weariness did he undergo! He that feeds others with his own flesh had many a hungry belly. He that gave others that water, of which whosoever drinketh shall thirst no more, had his own veins sucking and paining him for thirst. He that is himself the only ark for the weary dove to fly to for rest, did himself take many a wearisome step, and travel many a tiresome journey. Well might the prophet call him 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs,' though he had suffered no more than what is already written; but all this was but the beginning of his sorrows. The dregs of the cup were at the bottom. Doubtless many an aching heart had he, as a woman with child, beforehand, when he thought of the bitter pangs, sharp throes, and hard labour which he was to suffer at the close of his life. O friend, remember this Son of David and all his troubles. But to come to his end, which is specially represented in this ordinance, I will take him in the garden, where he felt more than I can write or think. Consider his body there; it was all over in a gore blood. Ah, what suffered he, when he did sweat clods of blood! To sweat blood is against nature, much more in a cold season, most of all when he was full of fear and terror; then the blood retreats to the heart to guard it, and to be guarded by it.

But behold, reader, thy Saviour for thy sake, and under the weight of thy sins, did sweat blood in a cold night, when he was exceedingly afraid. Ah! who would not love such a Saviour, and who would not loathe sin? But the sufferings of his body were nothing to the sufferings of his soul; these were the soul of his sufferings. Observe his expression, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful:' 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death.' Unto death, not only *extensively*, seventeen or eighteen hours, till death ended

his life; but chiefly *intensively*, such sorrow as the pangs of death bring—surely far greater. Again, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' Wise and valiant men do not complain of nothing. Ah, how bitter was that cup which valour and resolution itself seemed unwilling to drink! The two most tormenting passions, which are fear and grief, did now seize upon him in the highest degree: 'He began to be sorrowful and very heavy,' saith Matthew, chap. xxvi. 37. 'He began to be sore amazed and very heavy,' saith Mark, chap. xiv. 33.

Reader, follow him further; one disciple selleth him at the price of a slave; another disciple forsweareth him; all of them forsake him, and fly; the greedy wolves lay hold on this innocent lamb; the bloody Jews apprehend him, bind his hands like a thief, and hale him away to the high priest; then they hire persons to belie truth itself: but when their testimony was insufficient, upon his own most holy confession, a sentence of condemnation is passed upon him. Consider now how the servants smite his blessed cheeks with their fists, and spit on that beautiful face with their mouths, which angels counted their honour to behold; the masters flout him with their scornful carriage, and mock him with their petulant language: he must be the sink into which they fling all their filth. Afterwards they carry him to Pilate; he sendeth him to Herod; Herod, with some scorns and scoffs, sendeth him back. Thus is he, like a foot-ball, spurned up and down between those inhuman wretches: Pilate tears his flesh with wounds and nails, and presenteth him to the people with a crown of thorns on his head, to move pity; the people, thirsting after his blood, can by no words be persuaded, by no means be prevailed with, to let this innocent dove escape. Though he be put in competition with a murderer, yet the murderer is preferred before him; and as the worst of the two, he is at last condemned as a seditious person, and a traitor against Cæsar's crown and dignity, to be crucified without the gate, lest the city should be polluted with his blood. Now, reader, come along, like the beloved disciple, and behold thy Saviour bearing his own cross, and going to the place of execution to die the death of a slave, for no freeman was ever crucified; therefore Julian, in derision, called him *The staked God.* He is no sooner come to the dismal place of dead men's skulls, but they tear off his clothes, and some think skin and all, glued to his back with their bloody scourgings. Now they stretch his body, as cloth with tenters, and rack it so that his bones start out of his skin—'I may tell all my bones,' Ps. xxii. 17,—in nailing his two hands to the two horns,

and his feet, those parts so full of nerves and sinews, and so the most sensible of any parts of the body, to the stump of the cross, ('They digged my hands and my feet,') and hang him up between two thieves, as the most notorious malefactor of the three; 'He was numbered among the transgressors.' His bloody, watching, fasting, scorched, racked body, is oppressed with exquisite pain, and his anguish so vehement that he crieth out, 'I thirst;' to quench which they give him vinegar and gall, and spice it with a scoff to make it relish the better; 'Let us see whether Elias will come and save him.' But oh, who can imagine what he suffered in his soul, when he hung under the weight of men's revenge, devils' rage, the law's curse, and the Lord's wrath! Men 'revile him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself: he saved others, himself he cannot save:' 'To him that was afflicted, pity should have been shewn; but they added affliction to the afflicted, and forsook the fear of the Almighty.' All the devils in hell were now putting forth their utmost power and policy, for 'this was their hour, and the power of darkness,' to increase his sufferings, that, if possible, they might provoke him to sin, thereby to have separated his human nature from his divine, that it might have perished eternally, and all mankind with it; but the sting of his death is yet behind. The head of that arrow which pierced his heart indeed was the frown of his Father. That his kinsmen, the Jews, whom he came to sanctify and redeem, for he was 'the glory of his people Israel,' should deliver him up to be crucified, was not a small aggravation of his misery: that his apostles, that had been eye-witnesses of his miracles, and ear-witnesses of his oracles, (to whom he had spoken so pathetically, 'Will ye also forsake me?' and who had told him so resolutely, 'We will go with thee into prison, and to death,' Luke xxii. 23; Mat. xxvi. 35,) should now in his greatest extremity turn their backs upon him, added some more gall to his bitter cup: that his mother should stand by the cross weeping, and have her soul pierced through with the sword of his sufferings, was far from being an allay to his sorrows; but that his Father, of whom he had often boasted, 'It is my Father that honoureth me;' 'My Father loveth me;' 'I and my Father are one,' should now in his low estate, in his day of adversity, in his critical hour, not only not help him, and leave him alone, as a harmless dove amongst so many ravenous vultures, to contest with all the fury of earth and hell; but also pour out the vials of his own wrath upon him, and (though the union was not dissolved, yet)

suffer the beams, the influences to be restrained, that he might fully bear the curse of the law, and feel the weight of sin; this was the hottest fire in which the paschal lamb was roasted; this caused that heart-breaking, soul-cutting, heaven-piercing expression, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Oh how, how justly might he have cried out with Job, 'Have pity upon me, my friend, have pity upon me, for the hand'—not only of my enemies and my friends, of multitudes of men, and of legions of devils, but the hand—'of God hath touched me.' How truly might the husband have taken up his spouse's lamentation: 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by! Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.' Ah, who can write or read such a tragedy with dry eyes?

Friend, when thou art at the sacrament, think of these sufferings, and believe it, they will make work among thy sins. When thou takest the cup of wine, do not forget the cup of wormwood which thy Saviour drank for thy sake; 'he drank of the brook in the way;' he drank the cup of his Father's wrath, infinitely embittered with the curse of the law, that thou mightest drink the cup of blessing. At the table obey his own command, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'

Secondly, Meditate on the affection of Christ. 'We will remember thy love more than wine,' saith the spouse. When thou seest the wine, think of that love which is better than wine. Believe it, if ever there were a love-feast, this is it. Men testify their love in bestowing food on their hungry friends; but ah, what love was that which gave his blessed body and precious blood to feed his starving enemies! He that considereth what Christ suffered, and for whom, may well think he was little else but a lump of love. His compassion is infinitely visible in his passion! What love was that which moved him to lay down his life for thee! Friend, if ever thou hadst hard thoughts of Christ, take a view of him in the former subject of meditation, and consider whether his heart be not set upon sinners, when he shed his heart-blood for their souls. The redness of the fire discovers its heat. Oh, how did the redness of this Rose of Sharon, the blood which issued from his head, and back, and hands, and feet, and heart, and whole body, speak his burning, his fiery love! Well might the apostle John join and pair those turtle doves: 'Who hath loved us and washed us in his blood,' Rev. i. 5. In every drop of his blood there is an ocean of love. Well might the apostle Paul produce this as an undeniable

testimony of the truth of his love, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me,' Gal. ii. 20. His bleeding passion was such a full demonstration of his dearest affection, as the whole world never saw the like before, nor ever shall again. In it his love was dissected and ripped up—you may tell all its bones. Judas gave him to the Jews, out of love to money; the Jews gave him to Pilate to be condemned, out of love to envy; Pilate gives him to the soldiers to be crucified, out of love to self-interest; but Christ gave himself, out of pure love to save souls. The great and glorious God doth things that are singularly eminent for the manifestation of his attributes. When he would evidence his power, he produceth with a word the whole creation out of the barren womb of nothing. He did but will it, and the whole world presently started into being. By this he often proves his deity, Isa. xlv. 12, and xliii. 11. As shadows represent the figure of those bodies from whence they are derived, so do the creatures manifest the power of their maker.

When he would manifest his justice, he layeth the dark vault of hell, and layeth in, and storeth it with fire, and brimstone, and chains, and blackness of darkness, and gnawing worms, and pure wrath, and devils, and all the instruments of eternal death, Rom. ix. 22. When he would make known his wisdom, he findeth out a fit mediator, and thereby reconcileth those attributes which before were at odds, his justice and his mercy. When man was fallen, justice pleaded for his deserved damnation, according to the threatenings of the law; mercy pleadeth for his gracious salvation, he being deluded by the devil. Now, it would have non-plussed the heads of all the men and angels in the world, had they been united in a consultation, to have found out a way to satisfy both the demands of justice and the entreaties of mercy; but God did it—he causeth 'mercy and justice to meet together, pity and righteousness to kiss each other,' therefore the mediator is called 'the wisdom of God,' 1 Cor. i. 14; and the finding out this way is called 'the manifold wisdom of God,' or the 'embroidered wisdom of God,' Eph. iii. 10. It is an allusion to a curious piece of needlework, wherein there are various expressions of art. So in this way of man's recovery, there are various and curious expressions of divine wisdom. But when God would proclaim his love, that attribute which, like oil, swimmeth at the top of them all, which is most in favour, which he delighteth so exceedingly in, what will he do? Why, he layeth down his life: 'Greater love than this hath no man, than that a man lay down his life for his friends,' John

xv. 13. Jacob shewed his love to Rachel, by enduring the heat of the day and the cold of the night for her. But Jesus shewed his love to his beautiful spouse by undergoing the cursed, painful, and shameful death of the cross for her. Oh, what love was that! It is storied of the pelican, that when her young ones are stung with some poisonous serpent, she beats her breast with her beak, till the warm blood gusheth out, which they suck, and recover. We were all stung mortally by the old serpent, the devil, but behold the love of this heavenly pelican, he lets out his heart blood to recover us. In his birth and life he manifested his love; the midst of that chariot in which he drew his spouse before, was 'paved with love;' but his death wrote his love in the greatest print, in the largest character, though all in red letters; for his whole body was the book, his precious blood was the ink, the nails were the pens, the contents of it from the beginning to the end are *love, love.* There is nothing else to be read but *love, love.* 'In this was manifest the love of God,' saith the apostle, 1 John iv. 9. His love before was glorious, yet hid as the sun under a cloud; but at his death it did shine forth in its meridian splendour, in its noonday brightness, with such hot beams and refreshing rays, that every one must needs take notice of it. The Jews say of Esdras, that if the lamp of love were quite extinct it might be lighted again at his brain. How true is this of Christ! If love were quite lost amongst all the creatures, all might be found in Jesus Christ. His name is love, his nature is love, all his expressions were love, all his actions were love: he bought love, he preached love, his lips dropped love, he practised love, he lived in love, he was sick of love; nay, he died for love; it was love that took upon him our nature; it was love that walked in our flesh; it was love that went up and down doing good; it was love that took our infirmities; it was love that gave sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, ears to the deaf, life to the dead; it was love that was hungry, and thirsty, and weary; it was love that was in a bloody agony; it was love that was sorrowful unto his own death, and my life; it was love that was betrayed, apprehended, derided, scourged, condemned, and crucified; it was love that had his head pierced with thorns, his back with cords, his hands and feet with nails, and his side with a spear; it was love that cried out, 'Weep not for me, weep for yourselves:' 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.' Love left a glorious crown, and love climbed a shameful cross. O dearest Saviour, whither did thy love carry thee!

Reader, I could lose myself in this pleasant maze of Christ's love.

Methinks thy heart should be ravished with the sense of this love. The truth is, it is a bottomless love; none can sound it. The apostle might well call it, A known unknown love, Eph. iii. 19. It is well thou canst find it; but I am sure thou canst not fathom it. One disciple may shew his love to another, by giving a cup of cold water; but the Master shewed his love to his disciples by broaching his heart to give them a cup of warm blood. The sacraments, as Calvin observeth, did flow out of the sides of Christ. When the soldier pierced his side, there came out water (for baptism) and blood (for the supper).

Reader, when thou beholdest the broken bread, and rememberest the bruised body of Christ, do not forget his love, which is the best sauce to thy meat. I must tell thee, though there be never so many dishes at the table, this love is the banquet. Consider his willingness to be wounded for thee, because his heart was so deeply wounded with love to thee. Thou hast heard of such indignities and injuries offered to him, as the sun himself was ashamed to behold, and hid himself from them; yet Christ was ready for them, and willing to them. The Lamb of God did not struggle when he was led to the slaughter, but did bear his own cross: he was his own priest, as well as his own sacrifice and altar. His death was violent in regard of others, but voluntary in regard of himself. He cried to his Father, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,' Heb. x. 4. When his sinless nature had a reluctancy against it, though when he was in a bloody sweat, he soon corrects it with, 'Not my will, but thy will be done.' He went to the place which Judas knew, John xviii. 2. He struck them that came to apprehend him down, to shew that he could, if he had pleased, have struck them dead. Rather than they shall want proof for his condemnation, he will confess himself guilty of the charge. He might, if he had listed, have commissionated twelve legions of angels for his lifeguard, but he forebore it: 'He 'laid down his life;' he 'gave himself;' he 'gave up the ghost;' he had 'a baptism to be baptized with, and he longed to have it accomplished.' But, friend, what thinkest thou was the lump of sugar which did so sweeten this cup, notwithstanding all its bitter ingredients, to make it go down so glib and pleasant? truly nothing but love. Love to Dinah made Shechem willing to be circumcised; love to Christians made Christ willing to bleed, and be buffeted, and crucified. The mother can toil and moil all day with her child, and count it a pleasure, when another had rather go to plough all day; but what is the reason? nothing but her love. Jesus Christ delighted in the work of man's redemption—'I delight to do thy

will, O God'—which would have broke the backs of the very angels; and why? because of his love.

It is observed, the myrrh which is let out by the incision of the tree is precious; but that which floweth of its own accord is most choice and precious. Christ's veins were indeed opened by others' incision, when Pilate scourged his back, and the nails his hands and feet; but one drop of this blood is more worth than millions of worlds; for even at these times he bled voluntarily, as well as in the garden, when the myrrh of his blood dropped of its own accord. Oh, of what infinite value is his blood! oh, how much did he love his, when the very oil which consecrated him to those unknown sorrows was the oil of gladness to him! Remember this love more than wine.

Thirdly, Meditate on thy corruptions. As his love was the inward moving cause, so thy sins were the outward procuring cause, of his sufferings: 'He was wounded for thy transgressions, he was bruised for thine iniquities; the chastisement of thy peace was upon him,' Isa. liii. 5. When thou art at the sacrament, which fitly representeth Christ's sufferings, consider with thyself, What was that which brought the blessed Saviour into such a bleeding condition? It was my sin; I was the Judas which betrayed him, the Jew which apprehended him, the Pilate that condemned him, and the Gentile which crucified him. My sins were the thorns which pierced his head, the nails which pierced his hands, and the spear which pierced his heart. It was I that put to death the Lord of life: he died for my sins; he was 'made sin for me, who knew no sin;' his blood is my balm, his Golgotha is my Gilead. Oh, what a subject is here for meditation! He suffered in my stead, he bore my sins in his body on the tree, he took that loathsome purging physic for the diseases of my soul. When he was in the garden in his bloody agony, grovelling on the ground, there was no Judas, no Pilate, no Jew, no Gentile there, to cause that unnatural sweat, or to make his soul sorrowful unto death; but my pride, my unbelief, my hypocrisy, my atheism, my blasphemy, my unthankfulness, my carnal-mindedness, they were there, and caused his inward bleeding sorrows, and outward bloody sufferings. Ah, what a heavy weight was my sin to cause such a bloody sweat in a frosty night! My dissimulation was the traitorous kiss, my ambition the thorny crown; my drinking iniquities like water made him drink gall and vinegar; my want of tears caused him to bleed; my forsaking my Maker made him to be forsaken of his Father. Because the members of my body were instruments of iniquity, therefore the members of

his body were objects of such cruelty; because my soul was so unholy, therefore his soul was so exceeding heavy. O my soul, what hast thou done?

We do not say the executioner kills a man for theft or murder; but his theft or murder, they hang him; so in this case, it was not so much the Jews or soldiers—for they were the executioners—that put Christ to death, as our thefts and murders, and breaches of God's law, which were imputed and laid to his charge.

There is a story of a king of France named Lladoveyus, that when he was converted to Christianity, one day hearing Remigius the bishop reading the Gospel of our Saviour's passion, he presently fell into this passionate expression: Oh that I had been but there with my Frenchmen, I would have cut all their throats! little considering that his and others' iniquities were Christ's greatest and most cruel enemies. Reader, when thou art at the table, think of those sins which caused such sufferings. Consider the deepness of that stain which the blood only of God could wash out. Ah, what a sickness is sin, when nothing less than the blood of the Son of God can heal it!

Secondly, As at the table some subjects must be considered, so some graces must be exercised. A sacrament is a special season, a spring-time for those trees of God's own planting to bud, blossom, and put forth their fruit. Now, reader, if ever, rouse up thy spirit, and stir up the gifts of God which are in thee. Call aloud to thy graces, which may possibly be sleeping, as David: Ps. lvii. 8, 'Awake, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.' Awake, my graces! Can ye not watch with my dearest Saviour one hour? Awake, my faith, love, and repentance; I myself will awake presently. It is not the hawk which sitteth hoodwinked on the fist, but the seeing, flying hawk, which doth the service. The clock which standeth still is of no use; it is the going, moving clock which attains its end. Grace acted will now do thee eminent service, and help thee to attain the end of the sacrament.

First, Act faith. *Dormit fides et dormit Christus*, saith Austin, If faith sleepeth, Christ sleepeth. Call forth first that commander-in-chief; and then the private soldiers, the other graces, will all follow. Faith must be the eye whereby thou seest Christ: Zech. xii. 10, 'They shall see him whom they have pierced, and mourn.' Faith is the mouth by which thou feedest on Christ, John vi. 53. Faith is the feet by which thou goest to Christ, John vi. 35. Faith may say to thee, as Christ did, 'Without me thou canst do nothing;' without me thou canst do nothing for thy own welfare, nothing for

God's honour at this ordinance. It is said of the Indian gymnosophists, that they will lie all day upon their backs gazing on the beauty of the natural sun. Friend, at this ordinance, if at any time of thy life, view the beauty of this true Sun. As Pilate, when he had scourged him in such a bloody, barbarous manner, brings him forth to the Jews with, *Behold the man;* so when thou considerest the bread and wine, behold the man; behold the broken, bruised Saviour. A man without faith, like the unbelieving lord, seeth the plenty, but doth not eat of it.

There is a threefold act of faith to be put forth at a sacrament. First, Faith must look out for Christ; secondly, Faith must look up to Christ for grace; thirdly, Faith must take Christ down, or receive him and grace.

1. Faith must look out for Christ. Consider that Jesus Christ is the very soul of the sacrament; without him it is but the carcase of an ordinance. Christ and the Scripture bring comfort; Christ and prayer cause spiritual profit; *Accedat Christus ad elementum, et fiet sacramentum.* Christ and the elements make a sacrament; Christ and the sacrament make a rare feast. Therefore be sure thou look out for Christ. Rest not in the bread and wine, but look farther. When thou sittest at the table, let the speech of thine heart be, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?' Turn to God and say, as they to Philip, 'Sir, I would fain see Jesus;' Lord, I would fain see Jesus Christ. Let neither word, nor prayer, nor elements, nor all things content thee without Christ. As Isaac told his father, 'Father, behold here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' so do thou look up to thy heavenly Father: Father, behold here is the preacher and here is the Scripture, and here is the bread and here is the wine, but where is the body and blood of my Saviour? Lord, where is the lamb for a sacrifice? Father, Father, where is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world? If the angels that are present at the sacrament should speak to thee, give them occasion for the same language which they gave the woman at the sepulchre, 'We know whom thou seekest, thou seekest Jesus which was crucified: come, see the place where the Lord lay.' Come see the promise, see the elements in which the Lord lieth, Mat. xxviii. 5, 6.

If the Spirit of God, seeing thee so eager and earnest for a sight of Christ, should put by the hangings behind which the Lord Jesus hid himself purposely to be sought, and present him to thee with his glorious retinue of graces and comforts, with the precious fruits of his grievous passion, and bespeak thee thus, Cheer up, poor

Christian, behold the Lamb of God; behold King Jesus with the crown of thorns wherewith his foes crowned him in the day that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his father crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart; O friend, what would such a sight be worth to thee! I am confident thou wouldst value it above all the silver in the world. Well, be of good comfort; do but look for him and he will look after thee. Say to him, as the spouse, 'Make haste, my beloved; be thou like the hart and roe upon the mountains of spices;' 'Make no tarrying, O my God;' and doubt not but he will answer thee almost as he doth his spouse, in a sense of mercy, not of judgment, 'Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me,' to give to thee according to thy faith.

Reader, act Mary's part, and thou shalt meet with Mary's portion. When Mary went to the sepulchre, John xx. 13, she looketh into it, seeth the linen but not the Lord, and presently falleth a weeping. Oh, saith she, 'they have taken away my Lord!' 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' Jesus Christ could now no longer absent himself; he heard the voice of her weeping, and gave her a gracious meeting: 'Mary,' saith Christ; 'Rabboni,' saith Mary. Now her heart cleaves to him, and her hands clasp about him; and she hears that golden message, 'Go to my brethren, and tell them I go to my Father and your Father.' So when thou comest to the table, and seest the linen and not the Lord Jesus, be not satisfied; Oh, dart up thy complaints to heaven, Lord, I came not to see the linen, I came not for the bread and wine, I came to see Jesus Christ. O Lord! what shall I do? They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where to find him. Ah, Lord, what is the word to me without Christ, but as a conduit without water! and what is the element to me without Christ, but as a cup without wine! Oh, what wilt thou give me if I go from thy table Christless! Thou mightest be confident that Jesus Christ would hear such sighs, and would hasten away to bless and kiss thee.

2. Faith must look up to Christ for grace. Look up to Christ as a treasury of grace for the supply of all thy necessities, and put thy hand of faith into this treasury, and thou shalt take out unsearchable riches. Austin puts the question, how a Christian may put out a long arm to reach Christ in heaven? and answers, *Crede, et tenuisti,* Believe, and thou hast taken hold of him. Christ is a full breast; faith is the mouth which draweth and sucketh the breast,

and getteth spiritual nourishment out of it. The blessed Saviour is a precious and deep mine, but faith is the instrument whereby we dig the gold out of it. As the Spanish ambassador said of his master's treasury, in comparison of that treasury of St Mark in Venice, In this, among other things, my master's treasury differeth from yours, in that my master's treasury (alluding to his Indian mines) hath no bottom, as I see yours to have. For thy comfort, know that the riches in Christ are inexhaustible, and his bags are bottomless. He can 'supply all thy needs,' Phil. iv. 13.

When thou art at this ordinance, look on Christ as a fountain running over with the water of life, and the sacrament as a channel cut out by Christ himself to convey living water to thy soul. Thou art diseased; go in this ordinance to Christ as a physician to heal thee. Thou art an indigent beggar; go to Christ's door, I mean the sacrament, with an expectation of a large dole. Do not sit down in despondency, as the patriarchs in a scarcity of food; but since thou hast heard there is corn in Egypt, bread enough in thy Father's house, sufficiency of grace in Jesus Christ, go make haste to this Son of Joseph, who is Lord of the country, and hath the command of all the storehouses in the land, and will load thee with more than thou canst desire. Are thy wants many? He hath infinite wealth. Hast thou no money to buy, no merits to offer? Why, he selleth 'without money, and without price.' They that bring money have it returned back in their sacks, for he takes none. 'Whosoever will, may drink of the water of life freely,' Rev. xxii. 17.

The sacrament is as a conduit which receiveth water from the river; therefore when thou hast brought the vessel of thy soul to the conduit, thy work must be by faith to turn the cock, and then it will run freely, and fill thy vessel. Be sure that thou mind the promise, 'This is my body;' 'This cup is the New Testament in my blood.' Thy faith will be celestial fire to extract the quintessence and spirits of the promise.

3. Faith must receive Christ, and apply him to thy soul. When thou puttest forth the hand of thy body to take the bread and wine, do thou put forth the hand of faith to receive the body and blood of Christ. This is one principal act of faith, like Joseph of Arimathea, to take Jesus down from his cross and lay him in the new tomb of thine heart. Like Thomas, put thy finger of faith into his side, and cry out, 'My Lord, and my God.' Be not discouraged, O penitent soul. Are thy sins many?—His mercy is free. Are thy sins weighty?—His merits are full. Thou comest for bread, and will thy Saviour give thee a stone? He took notice

of thy serious preparation for this ordinance, and will he frustrate thine expectation at it? Did he ever send hungry soul empty away? The law of man provides for the poor in purse, and will not the gospel of Christ provide for the poor in spirit? Is not his commission to bind up the broken-hearted, and can he be unfaithful? Why shouldst thou mistrust truth itself? Let me say to thee, as the disciples to the blind man, 'Be of good cheer, he calleth for thee.' See how he casteth his eyes upon thee with a look of love, as once upon Peter. Observe, he stretcheth out his arms wide to embrace thee; he boweth down his head to kiss thee. He crieth to thee, as to Zaccheus, 'I must abide at thy house,' in thy heart to-day. Oh make haste to receive him, and make him a feast by opening the doors of thy soul, that the King of glory may enter in. Say to Christ, Lord, though I am unworthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, yet thou art so gracious as to knock at the door of my heart, and to promise, if I open, that thou wilt come in and sup with me; and then call to him, as Laban to Abraham's steward, 'Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, why standest thou without? I have prepared lodging for thee,' Gen. xxiv.

Truly, reader, shouldst thou, having mourned unfeignedly for thy sins, now by unbelief hang off from thy Saviour, thou wouldst much dishonour him, and disadvantage thyself. Christ's *greater things* are for them that believe: 'If thou wilt now believe, thou shalt see the glory of God.' I am very confident, if thou hadst been by the cross (broken heart) when thy Saviour suffered, and shouldst have kneeled down before him, and said, Dearest Saviour, Why art thou now wrestling with the wrath of heaven, and rage of hell? He would have answered, To satisfy (poor soul) for thy sins. Again, Why dost thou die such a cursed death? He would have said, To take the curse of the law from thy back, that so thou mightest inherit the blessing. Once more, let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak this once; blessed Redeemer, why didst thou cry out I thirst, and drink gall and vinegar? Thou mightest have heard such a reply, To assure thee, thirsty sinner, that I am sensible of thy thirst, being scorched with that fury which is due to thy sins, and that thou mightest drink of that love which is better than wine. But stay, O weary, thirsty soul but a while, and by and by thou shalt see this side opened, and blood issuing out to quench thy thirst. Oh put the mouth of faith to that wound, and what thou shalt suck thence shall do thee good for ever. Reader, I have read that the soldier who pierced Christ's side was blind,

and that the blood flying out upon him recovered his sight. Sure I am that this blood, sprinkled on thy conscience, will purge it from dead works, to serve the living God. Oh, therefore, bathe thy soul in this blood; when thou art at the sacrament, say to God, as the eunuch to Philip, 'Here is water, what hindereth but I may be baptized?' Lord, here is blood, here is a fountain, what hindereth but I may wash in it? True, Lord, my person is unrighteous, but thy blood is justifying blood. My heart is polluted, but, O Christ, thy blood is sanctifying blood. My lusts are many and strong, but thy blood is mortifying blood. My soul is lost, but, sweetest Saviour, thy blood is saving blood. This justifying, sanctifying, saving blood, I drink, I apply for these ends. Oh, let this blood be upon me and my children for ever.

Away despair, my gracious Lord doth hear;
Though wind and wave assault my keel,
He doth preserve it, he doth steer,
Even when the boat seems most to reel.
Storms are the triumph of his art,
Well may he close his eyes, but not his heart.

Hast thou not heard what my Lord Jesus did?
Then let me tell thee a strange story;
The God of power, as he did ride
In his majestic robes of glory,
Resolved to light, and so one day,
He did descend, undressing all the way:

The stars his tire of light, and rings obtained,
The clouds his bow, the fire his spear,
The sky his azure mantle gained;
And when they asked what he would wear,
He smiled and said, as he did go,
He had new clothes a-making here below.

When he was come, as travellers are wont,
He did repair unto an inn;
Both then and after, many a brunt
He did endure to cancel sin,
And having given the rest before,
Here he gave up his life to pay our score.

But as he was returning, there came one,
Who ran upon him with a spear;
He who came hither all alone,
Bringing no man, nor arms, nor fear,
Received the blow upon his side,
And straight he turned, and to his brethren cried,

If ye have anything to send or write,
(I have no bag, but here is room,)
Unto my Father's hands and sight
(Believe me) it shall safely come;

That I shall mind what you impart,
Look, you may lay it very near my heart.

Or if hereafter any of my friends
Will use me in this kind, the door
Shall still be open; what he sends
I will present, and somewhat more,
Not to his hurt; sighs will convey
Anything to me. Heart-despair, away!—(*Herbert*—THE BAG.)

2. The second grace to be called forth is love; and truly if thou hast acted thy faith in his passion for, and affection to thy soul, I shall not in the least doubt but thy love to him will play its part. The creatures, some tell us, follow the panther, being drawn after her by her sweet odours. When Jesus Christ, out of infinite love, offered up himself a sacrifice for thy sins, surely the sweet savour thereof may draw thy heart after him. 'Because of the savour of thy good ointments, therefore the virgins love thee,' Cant. i. 4. There is nothing in Christ but what may well command thy love: 'He is the fairest of ten thousand: he is altogether lovely.' But his bloody sufferings for thee, and his blessed love to thee, one would think, are such loadstones, that if thou wert as cold and hard as steel, would draw thy soul both to desire him, and to delight in him. Meditate a little more on his love to thee. Publicans and sinners love their friends who love them; and wilt thou be worse than publicans and sinners? Consider seriously; Jesus Christ loved thee when thou wast in a loathsome estate, Ezek. xvi.; when thou wast wallowing in thy blood, when no eye pitied thee, then was his time of love; 'He passed by thee, and said unto thee, Live: yea, when thou wast in thy blood, he said unto thee, Live.' And wilt thou not love him?

Ponder the heat of his love; possibly the greatness of that fire may warm thy heart, and thou mayest reflect some heat back again; for indeed love is a diamond, which must be written upon with its own dust. He loveth thee as a servant; surely this is a favour; for he hath thousands of glorious angels, who count it their honour and happiness to serve him. To be made one of his hired servants, was the great privilege desired by the prodigal. 'Ye call me Lord and Master, and ye say well, for so I am,' John xiii. 13. But though this may be somewhat, it is not enough for him. He loveth thee as a friend: 'Ye are my friends,' John xv. 15. 'I have not called you servants, but friends.' Friends love entirely—witness Jonathan and David: 'Jonathan loved David as his own soul.' Friendship is one soul in two bodies, saith the philosopher: this is much; but his love to thee is more than so,

he loveth thee as his brother: 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren:' 'I will declare thy name unto my brethren,' Heb. ii. 11. Some brethren are knit very close in the bond of love. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, in a fight between the Earl of Kildare and Earl of Ter Owen, two of the Earl of Kildare's brethren were slain,[1] which he took so heavily, that he died shortly. Some write, that there is no such love in the world as between foster-brethren in Ireland: this love is great, but his love is greater. He loveth thee as his child; the stream of love descendeth most swiftly from parents to their children: 'He shall see his seed,' Isa. liii. 10. How tender is the mother of her child: 'Can the mother forget her child that sucketh her breast?' The mother's bowels will yearn towards her child; the mother's breasts will put her to pain, if not drawn, and thereby mind her of her child. But though the mother may prove a monster, and, like the ostrich, leave her young to be destroyed, 'yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord. Thou art engraven upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are ever before me,' Isa. xlix. 13–15. 'Children, have you any meat?' If not, lo, here is my body. Thou mayest say of Christ's love to thee, as David of Jonathan's, 'Thy love to me is wonderful, it far surpasses the love of women;' for he loveth thee as his spouse. Men do, or at least should, love their wives above all relations: 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife.' But who can conceive Christ's love to his spouse? 'Thou art all fair, my love; thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse: How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse,' Cant. iv. 8–10. The nearest affinity is spouse, and the nearest consanguinity is sister; to shew that his affection is like that of the nearest relations. If this be not enough, reader, he loveth thee as himself, nay, above himself; he did, as it were, hate himself out of love to thee. He denied himself, displeased himself, and gave himself to be buffeted, scourged, condemned, racked, crucified, and to be a sacrifice for thy sins. Well, is it possible for thee to read of this infinite love without love? When wood hath been laid a-sunning, it takes fire presently: hast not thou been so fitted by the warm hot beams of this sun, that now upon the very thoughts of Christ, thou art all in a flame? Truly it would be as great a miracle for thee to be in such a furnace of love, and not fired with love to him, as for the three worthies in Daniel to be in the midst of the fiery furnace and not burnt. Christ loved thee so unspeakably, as thou hast read, as a servant, as a friend, as a

[1] Camb. Brit.

brother, as a child, as a wife, as himself; nay, above himself: and all this when thou wast a sinner, without strength, yea, his enemy, (which threefold gradation the Holy Ghost taketh special notice of, Rom. v. 6, 8, 10;) and wilt thou ever give him cause to complain of thee, as Paul of his Corinthians, 'The more I love, the less I am beloved'? Love him dearly, love him entirely, love him above all, love him more than all. Say with the spouse, 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love;' and with holy Bradford, sprinkle thy trencher, thy food with tears, that thou canst love so loving and so lovely a Saviour no more.

3. When thou art at the table, exercise repentance. What sorrow for and anger against thy sins should the sight of a crucified Saviour cause! Some tell us, that if the murderer be brought near and touch the body slain by him, it bleeds afresh. Oh, when thou, who art indeed the murderer of the Son of God, doth touch and taste his body and blood, shouldst not thou fall a-bleeding, a-weeping afresh? Behold his broken, bleeding body with an eye of faith, and thine eye cannot but affect thine heart with grief. I am confident thou canst not see it with dry eyes. Was his soul exceeding sorrowful, heavy even unto death for thy sake; and is not thine, friend, for thy sins? Did he drop so much blood, and canst thou drop never a tear? The very rocks were rent at his sufferings, and is thy heart harder than those stones? Is it possible for the head to be so pained and pierced, and the members not be affected with it? Surely deep calleth unto deep—deep sufferings in Christ for deep sorrow in thee, O Christian. If his body were broken to let his blood out, thy soul may well be broken to let it in. 'They shall see him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only son,' Zech. xii. 10.

His love may make—as David's kindness—even a Saul to lift up his voice and weep. It is so great and so hot a fire, that one would think it would distil water out of thee, wert thou never so dry an herb. When Christ sat at supper in the pharisee's house, Mary washed his feet with her tears. When Christ and thy soul are supping together, thou mayest well weep in remembrance of thy unkindness and wickedness.

But the chiefest reason why I mention repentance now to be exercised, is not so much for thy contrition or sorrow for sin—though when the sweet sauce is a little sharp with vinegar the meat will relish the better for it—as for thine indignation and anger against sin. When thou considerest that thy dearest Saviour

in a cold night lay grovelling on the ground, all over in a bloody sweat; that thy best friend in the world was so inhumanly used, so barbarously butchered, thou shouldst cry out, as David, in a holy passion, 'As the Lord liveth, the (man, the) sin that hath done this thing shall surely be put to death.' When Antonius, after Cæsar was murdered in the senate-house, brought forth his coat all bloody, cut, and mangled, and laying it open to the view of the people, said, Look, here is your emperor's coat; and as the bloody-minded conspirators have dealt by it, so have they dealt with Cæsar's body. Upon this they were in an uproar, and cried out to slay the murderers, and took brands, and ran to the houses of the conspirators, and burned them down to the ground, and, as they apprehended the murderers, put them to death. Reader, thou seest at the sacrament the wounds and blood of thy blessed Redeemer, the dreadful, painful death which thy Sovereign underwent. Oh, what canst thou do less than vow to be revenged on his murderers, thy corruptions, and in a holy anger endeavour their speedy execution. If thou wouldst have a full sight of sin's filth and sinfulness, go to mount Calvary, and behold thy Saviour hanging upon the cross, and, good Lord, what thoughts wilt thou have of thy lusts! Physicians in unseemly convulsions advise their patients to look into a glass, that beholding their deformity, they may strive the more against it. The world never had such a glass as the sufferings of Jesus Christ for the discovery of sin's loathsome, ugly features, and its horrid, hideous, hellish face. Now, how should this light provoke thee to loathe and hate sin! Oh, what child would not abhor those weapons which murdered his dearest father!

It was the glory of Alexander, that, as soon as ever he had opportunity, he slew the murderers of his father upon his father's tomb. Truly, reader, a sacrament day is a special opportunity, and thou wilt shew but little love to thine 'everlasting Father' if thou dost not now put his murderers to death, upon those monuments of his passion. Now thou art at the table, think of thy unthankfulness, ambition, hypocrisy, covetousness, irreligion, and infidelity, and the rest, how these 'crucified the Lord of glory,' and resolve through the strength of Christ that these Hamans shall all be hanged, that these sins shall be condemned and crucified.

CHAPTER XX.

What a Christian ought to do after a sacrament.

I shall speak to thy duty after the supper, which consisteth mainly in these two things, thankfulness and faithfulness.

1. Thankfulness. After such a banquet as this, thou mayest well give thanks. The Jews at their passover did sing the hundred and thirteenth Psalm, with the five following psalms, which they called the great Hallelujah. A Christian should in everything and at all times give thanks, but at a sacrament the great Hallelujah must be sung; then God must have great thanks, then we must with our 'souls bless the Lord, and with all within us praise his holy name.' O reader, call upon thyself, as Barak and Deborah did, 'Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, Barak; utter a song, and lead captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam,' Judges v. 'Awake, my love; awake, my joy; utter a song.' 'A feast is made for laughter, and wine rejoiceth the heart of man.' Friend, is not this a rare feast? where is thy cheerful face? Is not here good wine, a cup of nectar indeed, the blood of the Son of God? What mirth, what music hast thou to this banquet of wines? Anciently it was the beginning and ending of letters,—*Gaudete in domino*, rejoice in the Lord. It will be an excellent conclusion of this ordinance to rejoice in the Lord. O let thy 'soul magnify the Lord, and thy spirit rejoice in God thy Saviour,' Luke i. 46, 47.

The cup in the sacrament is called the Eucharistical cup, or 'the cup of blessing;' let it be so to thee. Let thy heart and mouth say, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people,' Luke ii.

Canst thou think of that infinite love which God manifested to thy soul without David's return, 'What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?' His heart was so set upon thy salvation, his love was so great to thy soul, that he delighted in the very death of his Son because it tended to thy good. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him,' Isa. liii. 10. *Valde delectatus est*, Junius reads it, 'He was exceedingly delighted' in it. Surely the mind of God was infinitely set upon the recovery of lost sinners, in that—whereas other parents, whose love to their children in comparison of his to Christ is but as a drop to the ocean, follow their children to their graves with many tears, especially when they die violent deaths—he delighted exceedingly in the barbarous death of his only Son, in

the bleeding of the head, because it tended to the health and eternal welfare of the members. Friend, 'what manner of love hath the Father loved thee with?' He gave his own Son to be apprehended, that thou mightest escape; his own Son to be condemned, that thou mightest be acquitted; his own Son to be whipped and wounded, that thou mightest be cured and healed; yea, his own Son to die a shameful cursed death, that thou mightest live a glorious blessed life for ever. 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men.' Alas, how unworthy art thou of this inestimable mercy! Thou art by nature a child of wrath as well as others, and hadst been now wallowing in sin with the worst in the world, if free grace had not renewed thee; nay, thou hadst been roaring in hell at this hour if free grace had not reprieved thee. Thy conscience will tell thee that thou dost not deserve the bread which springeth out of the earth, and yet thou art fed with the bread which came down from heaven, with angels' food. O infinite love! Mayest not thou well say with Mephibosheth to David, 'What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? For all my father's house were as dead men before my lord, yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table.' Lord, I was a lost, dead, damned sinner before thee, liable to the unquenchable fire, and yet thou hast been pleased to set me among them that eat at thine own table, and feed on thine own Son. Oh, what is thy servant, that thou shouldst take notice of such a dead dog as I am?

Look abroad in the world, and thou mayest see others refused when thou art chosen, others passed by when thou art called, others polluted when thou art sanctified, others put off with common gifts when thou hast special grace, others fed with the scraps of ordinary bounty, when thou hast the finest of the flour, even the fruits of saving mercy. As Elkanah gave to Peninnah, and to all her sons and daughters, portions, 'But to Hannah he gave a worthy portion, because he loved her;' so God giveth others outward portions, some of the good things of this life; but to thee, O Christian, he giveth a Benjamin's mess,—his image, his Spirit, his Son, himself,—a worthy portion, a goodly heritage, because he loveth thee.

Others have a little meat, and drink, and wages, but thou hast the inheritance; others, like Jehoshaphat's younger sons, have some cities, some small matters given them; but thou, like the firstborn, hast the kingdom, the crown of glory; others feed on bare elements, thou hast the sacrament; others stand without doors, and thou art admitted into the presence chamber; others must fry

eternally in hell flames, and thou must enjoy fulness of joy for evermore. O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever; to him that chose thee before the foundation of the world, for his mercy endureth for ever; to him that called thee by the word of his grace, for his mercy endureth for ever; to him that gave his only Son to die for thy sins, for his mercy endureth for ever; to him that entered into a covenant of grace with thee, for his mercy endureth for ever; to him that hath provided for thee an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, for his mercy endureth for ever. 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.'

Remember the poor on that day. God's bounty to thee in spirituals may well provoke thy mercy to others in carnals. The Jews at their passover released a prisoner, in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Surely at the Lord's supper, when thy heart is warmed with God's compassion to thee, thy hand should be enlarged in contribution to the poor, in remembrance of thy redemption out of slavery to sin and Satan. The primitive Christians had their collections for the poor, and the Lord's supper, both on a day, on the first day of the week, because the saints, like the wall being then heated by the sun, should reflect that heat on the passengers, on others, Acts xx. 7; 2 Cor. xvi. 1. Thy cup runneth over, O let others drink with thee; thy charity may make thy coffer lighter, but it will make thy crown heavier. It was a notable expression of one, who having given much away, was like to want, and asked what she would do: I repent not of my charity, for what I have lost in one world I have gained in another.

2. Faithfulness. The sacrament is a strong engagement to sanctity, *Sacramentum est juramentum.* At the Lord's supper thou takest a new oath of allegiance to the King of saints, whereby every wilful iniquity after it becomes perjury. The Greek word for an oath cometh from a word which signifieth a hedge,[1] to shew that an oath should keep men in, and prevent their wandering out of the field of God's word. It is the character of a harlot, 'she forgetteth the covenant of her God,' Prov. ii. 17. I know that the devil will come to sit with thee after supper. Flies love to settle on the sweetest perfumes. When Israel had 'drunk of the rock which followed them, which rock was Christ,' then Amalek sought them. When Jesus Christ had received the sacrament of baptism, then the devil pursued him with his fierce assaults. When thou hast been at the table, expect the tempter. That subtle

[1] ὅρκος *ab* ἕρκος *septum*, a hedge.

thief will hear of the new treasure of grace which is brought into thy house, thy heart, and will use all his policy and power to rob thee of it. Thy care must be by stronger bolts and locks than ordinary, by greater diligence and watchfulness than before, to secure it.

Surely, reader, if thou didst but find the Saviour in the sacrament, thou canst not but fear sin after the sacrament. Thou hast seen what sin cost Christ. Didst thou not at the table see the Lord Jesus hanging on the cross? Didst thou not thus bespeak thy soul:—Look, O my soul, who hangeth there! Alas! it is thy dearest Redeemer. See his bloody head, bloody hands, bloody back, belly, his body all over bloody; but, oh, his bleeding soul! Dost thou not hear his lamentation? 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' What thinkest thou is the cause of all this? Ah, it is thy sins which is the source of all these sorrows. And canst thou join with them, or love those lusts that hate the Lord? Canst thou wound him whom God hath wounded, and crucify the Lord Jesus afresh? Hath not thy Saviour suffered enough already? Oh, here is a medicine *instar omnium*, instead of all, to kill those diseases of thy soul. It is said of the soldiers of Pompey, that though he could not keep them in the camp by any persuasion, yet when Pompey threw himself upon the ground and told them, If ye will go, ye shall trample upon your general,—then (saith Plutarch, in the life of Pompey) they were overcome. Truly, if nothing will dissuade thee from sin, yet this consideration, that it is a trampling upon thy blessed Saviour, should prevail with thee. Though thou shouldst be marching never so furiously, yet (as Joab's soldiers, when they saw the dead body of Amasa, stayed their march, and stood still) when thou seest the mangled, wounded, pierced, crucified body of thy Saviour, thou shouldst stop and proceed no further.

How many arguments mayest thou find in this ordinance to be close in thy obedience! The greatness of Christ's love calleth for graciousness in thy life. 'The love of Christ constraineth,' 2 Cor. v. 14. Other motives may *persuade*, but this *compelleth*. If deliverance from the yoke of Pharaoh were such a bond to obedience, what is deliverance from sin, and wrath, and hell? Mayest not thou, reader, say with the Jews, after such a deliverance as this, 'Should I again break thy commandments, wouldst thou not be angry with me till thou hast consumed me?' Ezra ix. 14. They that receive such courtesies (if any men in the world) sell their liberty, and ought to be Christ's servants, Luke i. 14. Friend, hath God

wiped off the old score? and wilt thou run again in debt? Did Christ speak peace to thee at the table? and wilt thou turn again to folly? O reader, when thou art tempted to sin, say with the spouse, 'I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?' I have washed my soul, how shall I pollute it with sin? I have given myself wholly to God before angels and men, and 'how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against my God,' against my Saviour, against my covenant? There is a beast, some write, which, if she be feeding, and doth but turn her head about, forgetteth what she was doing. Oh, do not thou, after thou hast fed on the bread of life, forget what thou wast doing; but as at the sacrament thou hast remembered Christ's death, so do it after by dying to sin all the days of thy life. Oh, do not use this ordinance, as papists do the pope's indulgences, to purchase a new licence to sin. Judas went from the supper to betray his Master. Absalom, as arrant a dissembler as he was, pretended to hate such ingratitude. 'Is this thy kindness to thy friend?' saith he to Hushai; 'why hast thou left him?' When thou art, by any sinister carriage, departing from Christ, give conscience leave to ask thee, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Ah, why dost thou leave him, and serve him thus? Thy sins will be more sinful, because God is more merciful to thee than to others. 'The children of Israel have (only, the Seventy read) done evil from their youth up,' Jer. xxxii. 30. As if there had been no sinners in the world but they: their privileges being greater than others', their provocations were more grievous. The unkindness of a friend hath much of an enemy in it. David was not much troubled at Shimei's railing; but Absalom's rebellion pierced his very soul. 'My son that came out of my bowels hath lifted up his hands against me.' Wilt thou give thy Saviour cause to complain, 'He that did eat bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me'? Ps. xli. 9. He that did eat at my table, nay, eat of my flesh and drink of my blood, he hath lift up his heart, and his hand, and his heel against me. It was an aggravation of Saul's fall; he fell 'as though he had not been anointed,' 2 Sam. i. And it will be a sad aggravation of thy fall, if thou shouldest sin as if thou hadst not been at a sacrament.

It is reported of an elephant, that being fallen down, and by reason of the inflexibleness of his legs, unable to rise, a forester came by and helped him up, with which kindness the elephant was so taken, that he followed the man up and down, did him much service, and never left him till his dying day. Reader, the moral is plain: thou wast fallen, and never able to rise of thyself. The

Lord Jesus Christ forsook his Father in heaven, and his mother on earth, suffered unconceivable sorrows, to help thee up. What love shouldst thou have to him? What service shouldst thou do for him? Thou canst not do less, since he hath 'redeemed thee out of the hands of thine enemies,' than 'serve him in holiness and righteousness all thy days.' As the hop in its growing follows the course of the sun from east to west, and will rather break than do otherwise, so shouldst thou, in all thy actions, follow the course of the Sun of Righteousness, and rather die than deny him.

When Moses came from the mount, where he had been conversing with God, his face shined, Exod. xxxiv. 30. When thou goest from the table where thou hast had sweet communion with thy God, the face of thy conversation must shine so with holiness that others may take notice of it.

It is said of the high priest and elders, that observing the language and carriage of Peter and John, 'they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus,' Acts iv. 13. So thy words should be so gracious, and thy works so exemplary after a sacrament, that all those with whom thou hast to do, may marvel and take knowledge that thou hast been with Jesus; that at the table thou didst sup with Christ, and Christ with thee.

I shall only answer a doubt or two from a troubled conscience, and conclude this ordinance.

Obj. 1. But possibly thou wilt say, (O penitent soul!) I have been at the sacrament and found little joy, what shall I do?

Ans. Though thou didst not find any ravishing comfort at the table, yet it may be thou mightest receive more grace from Christ. When thou didst not spring upward in joy, thou mightest root thyself more downward in humility. Here is no loss: heaven is the proper place for comfort, earth for grace. I expect my reward in another world. If I can but do my work well here, I shall be satisfied. A serious Christian may well be contented with solid peace without ecstasies. Therefore be not discouraged.

Obj. 2. But I find no peace, no calmness of spirit. I fear my heart was so dead and dull, that I did neither act grace in the ordinance, nor receive grace through the ordinance, for I saw never a smile in God's face all the while.

Ans. Didst thou not go in thine own strength? if so, no wonder that thou art disheartened. Jacob told his wives, 'I perceive that your father's countenance is not towards me as at other times;' but what was the matter? This Jacob, say Laban's sons, 'hath taken away all that was our father's, he hath got his riches.' The glory

of God, as I may say, is his wealth, his treasure, 'the riches of his glory,' Rom. ix. 23. Now if thou didst rob God of any part of his treasure, by thy self-confidence, it is no marvel that thy Father's countenance was not so pleasant towards thee as at other times. In brief, I would wish thee to reflect both upon thy preparation for, and carriage at the ordinance, and if thou findest thyself faulty, confess and bewail it; hereby thou mayest yet attain the efficacy of the ordinance. When physic is taken down and doth not work, physicians often give their patients something to quicken it, and it proves exceeding instrumental for the diseased person's good; a sincere lamentation of thy negligence before, or carelessness at the table, supposing that thy heart be right with God, will much help forward the operation of the sacrament. If thou findest that thou wast faithful in the discharge of thy duty, then by no means despond, but wait. Food doth not nourish as soon as it is taken into the body, there must be time allowed for concoction. The strongest meats are longest in digesting, but they give the most and the best nourishment. Faith and prayer will at last, like skilful midwives, deliver the promises safely of those blessings which did stick for a time in the birth. 'It is good that thy soul should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God.' There is light sown for thee, O thou child of light, who walkest in darkness; and be confident it will spring up.

A good wish about the Lord's supper, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The Lord's supper being one of the greatest mysteries of the Christian religion, a lively representation of my dearest Saviour's bleeding passion and blessed affection, and a real taste of that eternal banquet which I shall hereafter eat of in my Father's house at his own table, I wish in general that I may never distaste the person of my best friend by abusing his picture; that I may not go to the Lord's table as swine to their trough, in my sin and pollution, but may receive those holy elements into a clean heart. Oh that my lamp might be flaming, and my vessel filled with oil, whenever I go to meet the bridegroom! I wish, in particular, that my soul may be so thoroughly affected with Christ's special presence at this sacred ordinance, that I may both prepare for it, and proceed at it with all possible seriousness and diligence. Oh let me never be so unworthy and impudent as to defile that holy feast before the author's face.

I wish that my heart may have an infinite respect for the blood of my Saviour, the stream in which all my comforts, both for this and a better world, come swimming to me, which hath landed thousands safely at the haven of eternal happiness, one drop of which I am sure is more worth than heaven and earth; that as all murder is abominable, being against the light of nature, so Christ-murder may be most of all abhorred by me, as being directly against the clearest light of Scripture, and the choicest love which ever was discovered to the children of men. Good Lord, whatever I jest with, let me never sport or dally with the death of thy Son! Let me not give him cause to complain of me, as once of Judas, 'He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish is the same that betrayeth me!' Let me never buy a sacrament, as the Jews the potter's field, with the price of blood. 'Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy loving-kindness.'

I wish that true self-love may be so prevalent with me, that since I believe the profanation of the most precious things will be most pernicious to my soul, as the whitest ivory is turned by the fire into the deepest black, and the sweetest wine becometh the sharpest vinegar, I may tremble and fear before I receive, lest I should poison myself with that potion which is intended for my health, and cut the throat of my precious soul with that knife, wherewith I may cut bread, feed on it, and live for ever.

I wish that I may prepare my heart to meet the God of Israel at this holy ordinance; and to this end, that I may be impartial in the search and examination of my soul, whether I come short of the grace of God or no. Physicians judge sometimes of the inward parts by the tongue. The Roman Emperor Tiberius, when one pretended to the crown of a kingdom, discovered him to be a counterfeit by feeling his hands, and finding that they were not soft, as of a person tenderly bred, but hard as the hands of a mechanic. I desire that both by my tongue and hand, by my words and works, I may know the state and condition of my heart. In special, my prayer is, that I may never fail to try my faith, which is to the soul what the natural heat is to the body, by virtue of which the nutritive faculty turneth the food into nourishment, but may make sure of an interest in the vine before I drink of the fruit thereof.

I wish that before I go for a discharge, I may look into the book of my conscience, cast up my accounts, and consider how infinitely I am indebted to my God, that I may consider whence I am fallen

and repent, and like Tamar, though I am ravished and defiled by force, may yet rend my garments, my heart I mean, with godly sorrow and self-abhorrency. Oh that my soul might be so searched to the bottom that none of my wounds may fester, but all may be discovered and cured. I pray that I may not dare to turn the table of the Lord into the table of devils, by receiving the sacrament in the love of any known sin, but may go to it with a hearty detestation of every false way, and a holy resolution against every known wickedness. I wish that after all my pains in preparing myself, I may look up to Christ alone for assistance, as knowing that I am not sufficient of myself so much as to think anything, but my sufficiency is of God; blessed Saviour, be thou surety for thy servant, and bound for my good behaviour at the last and loving supper.

I wish that when I come to the table I may, like the beloved disciple, behold the wounds of my Saviour, and see that water and blood which did flow out of his side; that as in the Gospel I read a narrative, so in this ordinance I may have a prospective of his sufferings: how he emptied himself to fill me, and to raise my reputation with his Father, laid down his own; how he humbled himself, though he had the favour of a Son, to the form of a servant, and though he were the Lord of life and glory, to the most ignominious death, even the death of the cross.

I wish that in his special passion I may ever take notice of his affection, and esteem the laying down his life, as the hyperbole of his love, the highest note that love could possibly reach. Ah! how near did this high priest carry my name to his heart, when he willingly underwent the rage of hell to purchase for me a passage to heaven! 'I will remember thy love more than wine.' I desire that when I see Christ crucified before mine eyes, in the breaking of the bread, and pouring out of the wine, I may not forget the cause, my corruptions, but may so think of them and my Saviour's kindness, in dying to make satisfaction for them, that as fire expelleth fire, so I may be enabled by the fire of love to expel and cast out the fire of lust.

I wish that however my body be attired, my soul may by faith put on the Lord Jesus Christ at this heavenly feast; that I may not only look up to him, as the cripple to Peter and John, expecting an alms, but may receive him by believing, and so banquet on his blessed body, and bathe my soul in his precious blood, that my spirit may rejoice in God my Saviour, whilst I am assured that though the pain were his, yet the profit is mine; though the

wounds were his, yet the balm issuing thence is mine; though the thorns were his, yet the crown is mine; and though the price were his, yet the purchase is mine. Oh let him be mine in possession and claim, and then he will be mine in fruition and comfort, 'Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief!' I wish, since love is the greatest thing my Saviour can give me, for God is love, and the greatest thing which I can give my Saviour, that his love to me may be reflected back to him again, that my chiefest love may be as a fountain sealed up to all others, and broached only for him who is altogether lovely, that I may hate father, mother, wife, child, house, and land, out of love to him; that many waters of affliction may not quench this love, but rather like snuffers make this lamp to burn the brighter. Beasts love them who feed them. Wicked men love their friends and benefactors; my very clothes warming me are warmed by me again, and shall not I love him who hath loved me, and washed me in his own blood! Oh that I could groundedly cry out with Ignatius, my love was crucified, and meet this Lord of heaven, as Elijah went up to heaven in a chariot of fire, in a flame of love; I desire that I may follow Christ at this ordinance, as the women did to his cross, weeping, considering that my sins were the cause of his bitter and bloody suffering; and oh that, as Saul eyed David, I might eye them all from that day forward, to slay and destroy them.

When my soul has been thus feasted with marrow and fatness, Lord, let my mouth praise thee with joyful lips. Ah, what am I, and what is my father's house, that when others eat the bread of violence, and drink the wine of deceit, I should eat the flesh and drink the blood of thine own Son? 'What is man, that thou art so mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou dost thus visit him?' I wish that I may shew my thankfulness to my God and dearest Saviour for these benefits—the worth of which men and angels can never conceive—by the love of my heart, the praises of my lips, and the exemplariness of my life. At the sacrament Christ gave his body and blood to me, and I gave my body and soul a living sacrifice to him, and that before God, angels, and men; the sacrament was *Beersheba*, 'the well of an oath.' Shall I pollute that heart which was solemnly devoted to God, and profane that covenant which I have seriously contracted with the most High? Should I, like Samson, break those bands asunder, and fetch that sacrifice away from the altar, which was tied with such strong cords of oaths and covenants? must I not expect to bring the fire along with it? Oh let me never start aside from my vow like a deceitful

bow! Lord, I have sworn, and will perform, that I will keep, through thy strength, thy righteous judgments. Lastly, I desire that I may not only differ from them who, like the Habassines,[1] will not spit on a sacrament day, but will spew the next day; deny sin at present, but afterwards defy[2] it; that I may not only be faithful to my oath of allegiance, but also fruitful in obedience; that as Elijah walked in the strength of one meal forty days, I may walk in the strength of that banquet, serving my Saviour and my soul all my days. In a word, I wish that I may ever after walk worthy of my birth, having royal, heavenly blood running in my veins; worthy of my breeding, being brought up in the nurture of the Lord, fed at his own table with the bread of heaven, clothed with the robes of his Son's righteousness; and that my present deportment may be answerable to my future preferment. Oh that I might in all companies, conditions, and seasons, walk worthy of him who hath called me to his kingdom and glory! Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

How to exercise ourselves to godliness on a Lord's-day.

Because the Lord's-day is the special time for religious duties, I shall therefore, reader, give thee here some particular directions for thy sanctification of it, and edification by it.

As of all actions, none call for more care than holy duties; so of all seasons for those actions, none commandeth so much caution and conscience as the Lord's-day.

The first command teacheth us the object of worship; the second, the matter of worship; the third, the manner of worship; the fourth, the time of worship.

That God is to be worshipped, that some time must be set apart for that work, is moral natural, and written on the tables of all our hearts; but that one day of seven must be consecrated to this end, is moral positive, and written on the tables of stone.

All nations have had their seasons for sacrifice; even the heathen, who worshipped dumb idols, had their festivals and holidays. It is reported of Alexander Severus, emperor of Rome, that he would on a Sabbath-day lay aside his worldly affairs, and go into the capitol to worship his gods. Among those that acknowledged the true God,

[1] In Prester John's country. [2] Qu. 'deify'?—ED.

the Turks have their *stata tempora*—set times of devotion—nay, they have their Friday-Sabbath.

But to keep the Lord's-day upon a conscientious ground, and in a religious manner, is peculiar to the true Christian. In the primitive times, the observation of this day was esteemed the principal sign of a saint. Indeed, our sanctification of it is by God himself counted a sign that he hath sanctified us, Exod. xxxi. 13.

It is observable that God hath fenced this command with more hedges than ordinary, to prevent our excursions:

1. It is marked with a *memento* above other commands, 'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy,' partly because of our forgetfulness, and partly because of its concernments.

2. It is delivered both negatively and affirmatively, which no other command is, to shew how strongly it binds.

3. It hath more reasons to enforce it than any other precept,—its equity, god's bounty, his own pattern, and the day's benediction.

4. It is put in the close of the first, and beginning of the second table, to note that the observation of both tables depends much upon the sanctification of this day.[1]

It is considerable also, that it is more repeated than other of the commands, Exod. xx. 8, xxxi. 14–16, xxxv. 2; Levit. xvi. 31, xxiii. 3, 32.

God would have Israel know, in those forequoted places, that their busiest times, earing and harvest, and the very building of the tabernacle, must give way to this precept.[2]

On the Lord's-day we go into God's sanctuary, and his pleasure is, that we reverence his sanctuary, Levit. xix. 30. The Jews indeed made a great stir about their outward reverencing the temple.[3] They tell us they were not to go in with a staff, nor shoes, nor to spit in it, nor, when they went away, to turn their backs upon it, but go sidling, Ezek. viii. 16; but certainly God's meaning is principally that we do, with inward reverence and seriousness, worship him in his sanctuary.

Reader, I desire thee to take notice, that the more holy any action is, the more heedful thou oughtest to be about it; upon which account the duties of this day require extraordinary diligence; for they have a double dye of holiness upon them; they are double-gilt. Thy task on that day, or the exercises thereof, are of divine

[1] Est caput religionis et totum Dei cultum continet.—*Willet in Exod.* xxxv. 1.

[2] Omni tempore sabbato debere cessare.—*Aug. in Exod.*, Quæst. 160. Willet *in loc.*

institution, and so is the time, the day. Thou hast God's hand and seal to the duties; he commands thee to pray, hear, sing, meditate, receive the sacrament; and thou hast also God's hand and seal to the day, Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Rev. x. It is considerable, that in the fourth command God doth not say, 'Remember the seventh day, to keep it holy'; but, 'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.' This Zanchy takes great notice of. Further, the seventh, or a seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; so, then, the morality of that command is one day of seven. The Jews' seventh day was buried in Christ's grave, though its shadow walked a little while after. Take heed how thou observest this day; God's eye is very much upon thy behaviour in his house;[1] therefore in the tabernacle, the place of public worship, it was commanded, Exod. xxv. 37, 'Thou shalt make seven lamps, and they shall light the lamps that they may give light;' to teach us that nothing there escapes his sight, for in his house there is always light. His eye beholds all thy commission of evil, and all thine omission of good there. In his sanctuary thou canst not sin in secret; there are seven lamps to discover thy miscarriages in the Lord's house, and therefore it behoves thee to be very pious in that place. Afterwards, when the temple was built, and became heir to the tabernacle, as that succeeded this in the celebration of God's worship; so also, in God's observation of all the works done there: 'Mine eye,' saith God, 'shall be there perpetually,' 1 Kings ix. 3. There is a threefold eye of God present in the assemblies of his people.

1. There is the eye of observation and inspection: God seeth what uprightness and seriousness there is in thy prayers and performances; God eyeth and takes notice what integrity and fervency thou hast in thy services and sacrifices: 'Mine eyes are upon all their ways,' Jer. xvi. 17. Whether thou art praying, or reading, or hearing, or singing, his eye is upon thee; and whether thou performest thy duties slothfully and sluggishly, or dutifully and diligently, he observeth thee: 'His eyes behold, and his eyelids try the children of men.'

2. There is the eye of favour and benediction. God's eye can convey a blessing as well as his hand: 'I will set mine eyes upon them for good,' Amos ix. 4. And God's eye can speak his good will, as well as his heart: 'Mine eye and my heart shall be there;' that is, in my house, 2 Chron. vii. 16. The affection of the breast is seen at the brows. 'Mine eye shall be upon the faithful of the land,' Ps. ci. 6. God's eye is in his house, to approve and bless

[1] Ne putes te in domo Dei male posse conversari et occultari.—*Oleaster.*

thee, if thou sanctify him in ordinances. Friend, keep the Lord's-day with care and conscience, perform thy duties with suitable graces, and God's eye will be upon thee, thou shalt see his love in his pleasant and gracious looks. Jesus Christ beholds and approves the gracious performances of his people; he seems to say to them, as Paul to the Colossians, 'Though I am absent from you in the flesh, yet am I present with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order,' Col. ii. 5.

3. There is the eye of fury and indignation. God's looks will speak his anger, as well as his blows: his fury is visible by his frowns. 'Mine eyes shall be upon them for evil.' God's sight can wound as deeply as his sword. Job speaks of him, 'He sharpeneth his eyes upon me,' Job xvi. 9. Wild beasts, when they fight, whet their eyes as well as their teeth. An enemy enraged looks on his antagonist as if he would look through him. He sharpeneth his eyes upon me, as if he would stab me to the heart with a glance of his eye; so an expositor glosseth on it: if thou wait on God irreverently, worship him carelessly, and profanest his day, either by corporal labour or spiritual idleness, thou mayest not expect his eye of favour, but of fury: 'If ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath, then will I kindle a fire which shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and none shall quench it,' Jer. xvii. ult., Ezek. xxii. 26–31. God's severity hath been remarkable on the profaners of his Sabbath. The first blow given the German churches was on the Lord's-day, which they carelessly observed; on that day Prague was lost. When men disturb God's rest, God doth usually deprive them of rest. The day of the Lord is like to be a dreadful day to them that despise the Lord's-day.

Truly God is as jealous in his courts under the gospel as he was under the law. Christ, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks throughout the world. He observes how holy duties are performed, and how his holy day is sanctified; 'Where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is in the midst of them,' Mat. xviii. 20. He is in the midst of us, to behold our inward and outward carriage in his courts; he observeth in praying, what confessions are made of sin, with what confusion of face, and contrition of heart, what petitions are put up for grace and pardon, with what integrity of spirit, and fervency of affection. He observeth in hearing, whether men hear with attention suitable to that word which is able to save their souls, whether men receive the truth in the love of it, whether they resolve on subjection, and to give themselves up to that form of

doctrine which is given down to them, or whether men hear sermons, as children turn over books, merely for the gays that are in them. 'He goeth down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley,' Cant. vi. 11. He seeth the rotten bough of hypocrisy, the leaves of profession, without the fruits of an answerable conversation, he seeth all thine unripe, sour, indigested duties.

Reader, if I were to counsel thee how to spend a market-day, so that thou mightest gain much wealth and treasure, I doubt not but thou wouldst hearken to me; I am now to advise thee how to spend the Lord's-day, the market-day for thy soul, so that thou mayest get the true treasure, durable riches and righteousness; I pray thee to hear and obey the directions which I have to deliver to thee from the Lord for that end.

First, Make preparation for the day. There is scarce any work which admits of any considerable perfection but requires some previous preparation. In works of nature, the ground must be dunged, dressed, ploughed, harrowed, and all to prepare it for the seed. In works of art the musician tuneth his violin, screwing up some of his strings higher, letting some down lower, as occasion is, and all to prepare it for his lesson, and indeed without this he would make but sad music. Truly, friend, thus it is with us in matters of higher moment; hearts, like soil, must be prepared for the seed of the word—how many a sermon hath been lost because this was wanting!—and the violins of our souls must be tuned to praise God, or otherwise they will sound but harshly in his ears.

The priests were to wash in the laver when they went into the tabernacle, and when they came near to the altar to minister, upon pain of death, Exod. xxx. 19, 20. Signifying that to holy performances there is required holy preparation; suitable to which is David's speech, 'I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar,' Ps. xxvi.

When the temple was to be built, the stones were hewn, and the timber squared and fitted, before they were brought to the place where the temple stood; there was neither axe, nor hammer, nor any use of them in the temple: and what doth this speak, but that the Christian must be polished and prepared to be a spiritual temple, an habitation for the God of Jacob, and also fitted for his worship, which was then in the temple?

There is no duty but requires some previous disposition. A little breakfast quickens the appetite to a good dinner; duty fits the heart for duty; consider prayer. The Christian must be poor in spirit, that would prevail in prayer for spiritual riches. The

vessel must be empty before it can be filled. 'O Lord, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear,' Ps. x. 17. For hearing; the weeds must be plucked up before the grain be thrown into the ground. 'Wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,' 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. In singing, the lungs must be good, the inwards clean before the voice will be sweet and clear. 'O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise,' Ps lvii. 7. So for the Lord's-day, the Israelites had their preparation. It was 'the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,' Mark xv. 42.

The preparation for the Lord's-day consisteth partly in care so to order worldly businesses, that they may not encroach on the Sabbath; some expositors observe that the word *remember*, in the Fourth Command, enjoineth a provident foresight and diligent despatch of earthly affairs on the day before, that nothing may remain to disquiet us in, or disturb God's day of rest. There is an observable place, 'If thou keep thy foot from my Sabbath,' Isa. lviii. 13, that is, from treading on my holy ground with the dirty feet of earthly affairs or affections. The Jews' preparation began at three of the clock in the afternoon, which the Hebrews called the Sabbath eve: the ancient fathers called *cœna pura*, from the heathen (say some) whose religion taught them in their sacrifices to certain of their gods, to prepare themselves by a strict kind of holiness, at which time they had a supper, consisting of meats holy in their opinion.

The Jews were so careful in their preparation, that, saith mine author,[1] to further it, the best and wealthiest of them, even those that had many servants, and were masters of families, would chop herbs, sweep the house, cleave wood, kindle the fire, and do such like things. The mariner that intendeth a voyage, putteth his ship off from land; so truly, friend, if thou wouldst launch heavenward upon a Lord's-day, there is a necessity that the vessel of thy heart be put off from the earth. When our blessed Saviour was teaching the people, he was disturbed by one that told him, 'Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee,' Mat. xii. 47. So when thou art hearing or praying, or about any religious ordinance, what an hindrance, what a disturbance will it be for thy heart to suggest to thee; man, thy calling, thy companions, or such and such things which lie upon the spoil through thy negligence in the week-days, they all stand without

[1] Buxtorf Syngog., Jud. c, 10, ex Talmud.

desiring to speak with thee. If thou wouldst avoid distraction, prevent the occasions. As Isaiah said to Hezekiah, 'Set thine house in order against thy death's day;' so I say to thee, set thy house in order, and thy heart in order, against the Lord's-day.

The main preparation of the heart for a Sabbath, lieth in removing the filth of sin, and in quickening and awakening grace. Sin must be removed.[1] If the stomach be foul, it must be purged before it be fed, or the meat will nourish and strengthen, not nature, but the ill humours: 'If a man purge himself from these,' it is true of evil affections, as well as evil persons, 'he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work,' 2 Tim. ii. 21.

'Superfluity of naughtiness' must be laid aside, before we can receive the word with meekness, James i. 21. When the vessel is unclean, it sours quickly the sweetest liquors poured into it; when the heart is unclean, it loseth the good it might receive by the truths of God.

As sin must be cast out, so grace must be called up; grace is like fire, apt to be deadish and dull, thy duty is beforehand therefore to blow it up. Most people upon a Sabbath adorn their bodies with their best clothes; but, alas! who almost attireth his soul as he ought on this day, when he is going to meet the blessed Redeemer!

Reader, suppose thou wert a person of great quality and estate, and the king should send thee word that he would dine with thee to-morrow, what preparation wouldst thou make for his entertainment? Would not thy first work be to cleanse thy house, by causing the dust to be swept out, the floors to be washed, nay, rubbed, everything to be neat and cleanly? Wouldst thou not put up thy choicest hangings, lay on thy richest carpets, bring out thy best plate, adorn thy room with thy costliest furniture, endeavour that all things should be in point, somewhat suitable to the dignity of so great a prince? I tell thee, that the great King of all the world doth give thee notice in his word, that on such a day, being the Sabbath, he intends to sup with thee. Now, friend, what preparation wilt thou make to testify thy respect to this blessed and only potentate? Canst thou beforehand do less than sweep out the dust of sin, and wash the room of thine heart clean, adorn it with the best furniture, the graces, the embroidery of the Holy Ghost? Truly unless this be done, Christ will not think himself welcome; nay, all

[1] Accedenti ad divina mysteria Deique contemplationem deponenda sunt calceamenta, *i.e.*, passiones, affectiones, simul et rationes humanæ et terrenæ.—*Cor. a Lapid.*, in Exod. iii.

thy pretended entertainment of him, will be not only infinitely unworthy of, but also provoking to, so jealous and glorious a prince.

Believe it, thy profit by a Sabbath depends not a little upon thy preparation for the Sabbath; till the matter be prepared, how can it receive the form? Job xi. 12, 13. Thou hast enjoyed many Lord's days, and it may be got little soul-saving good; thou goest to the house of God, where a table, in the preaching of the gospel, is set before thee, spread with all the dainties of pardon, love, grace, peace, and eternal life, at which others sit and feed; their souls are filled with marrow and fatness, and their mouths praise the Lord with joyful lips; but thou hast no stomach, canst eat little, and savour nothing; I dare be the physician to tell thee the cause and cure of this. The cause is, thy stomach is foul, thy heart is unclean; and therefore as a man that hath a cold, or some disease predominant, cannot relish his meat, but complains sometimes of the meat, sometimes of the cook, when the fault is in himself, so thou canst taste no goodness in the best meat; neither prayer nor Scripture, neither sermon nor Sabbath are savoury to thee, yet it may be thou blamest the preacher, he doth not dress the meat to thy mind, when the fault is in the foulness of thy affections. Thy cure must be, to purge out this old leaven, to take some pains beforehand in cleansing thy heart. When the stomach is clean, as after purging or fasting, how sweet is a piece of bread! So if thou wouldst but in secret search thy soul, vomit up thy filth by a penitent confession, cleanse thine heart by sincere contrition, and wouldst then frequent the public ordinances, thou wouldst find prayer sweet, preaching sweet, the sacrament sweet, every service sweet. Oh, how wouldst thou love 'the habitation of God's house, and the place where his honour dwelleth!'

'Prepare to meet thy God,' O Christian! betake thyself to thy chamber on the Saturday night, confess and bewail thine unthankfulness for, and unfruitfulness under, the ordinances of God; shame and condemn thyself for thy sins, entreat God to prepare thy heart for, and assist it in, thy religious performances; spend some time in consideration of the infinite majesty, holiness, jealousy, and goodness of that God, with whom thou art to have to do in sacred duties; ponder the weight and importance of his holy ordinances, how they concern thy salvation or damnation, thine everlasting life or death, how certainly they will either further thine unchangeable welfare, or increase thine endless woe; meditate on the shortness of the time thou hast to enjoy Sabbaths in; how near thy life may be to an end, how speedily and how easily God may take down

thine earthly tabernacle, how there is no working, no labouring, no striving in the other world, to which thou art hastening; and continue musing and blowing till the fire burneth; thou canst not think the good thou mayest gain by such forethoughts, how pleasant and profitable a Lord's-day would be to thee after such a preparation. The oven of thine heart thus baked in, as it were, overnight, would be easily heated the next morning; the fire so well raked up when thou wentest to bed, would be the sooner kindled when thou shouldst rise. If thou wouldst thus leave thine heart with God on the Saturday night, thou shouldst find it with him in the Lord's-day morning.

Secondly, Possess thy soul in the morning with the greatness of thy privilege, in the enjoyment of a Sabbath, and such seasons of grace. Look upon thy work that day as thy reward, thy duty on that day as thy greatest dignity. Oh, what a favour, what an honour, what happiness doth God vouchsafe to thee, in affording thee such a golden season! David, though a king, the head of the best people in the world, esteemed it an honour to be the lowest officer in God's house, to be a 'doorkeeper' there, to sit at the threshold, as it is in the Hebrew, Ps. lxxxiv. 10. If the Queen of Sheba could say, when she saw the wealth, and heard the wisdom of Solomon, 'Happy are these thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. And blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king,' 1 Kings x. 8, 9. Mayest not thou, when thou beholdest the beautiful face of thy Saviour, in the glass of ordinances, and hearest the sweet delightful voice of Jesus Christ, a greater than Solomon; when thou seest the delicate and plentiful provision, the feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, which he makes for his people, upon better ground say, Blessed are thy servants that hear thee daily, 'watching at thy gates, waiting at the posts of thy doors,' Prov. viii. 34. 'Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee.' And blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel, because he loved Israel for ever, therefore hath he made thee King.

The ordinances of God are called an appearing before God, the fruition of them is a seeing his face. Capernaum, because of them, was said to be lifted up to heaven. Who can tell what honour it is to appear in the presence of this king, or what happiness it is to see his comely countenance! Those that enjoy this are lifted up to heaven

Israel was an unparalleled people, because of this incomparable privilege: 'For what nation is there so great, which hath God so nigh unto them?' Deut. iv. 7. In the ordinances of God, the Christian hath sweet communion, with ravishing delight in, and inflamed affection to, the blessed God; in them he tastes God to be gracious, hath the first-fruits of his glorious and eternal harvest.

Well might the French Protestants call their place of public meeting paradise. Well might David cry out, Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2, and xxvii. 4, 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!' At the tabernacle God did meet David. Who can tell what joyful greeting there was at that holy meeting, what sweet kisses, what loving embraces God gave his soul?

As the ordinances are heaven in a glass, so the Lord's day is heaven in a map. This is to be valued at a high rate, because therein we enjoy all the means of communion with God, in the highest degree and measure, without interruption. The Hebrews call the week days profane days, but this is a holy, pious day. The Greeks call them working days, but this is a day of sweet rest. Other days are common and ordinary handmaids, but this is fitly termed by the Jews the queen of days. Many daughters have done wisely, but thou hast excelled them all. Many days, as lecture days, fast days, thanksgiving days, have done virtuously, have done valiantly; but thou, O queen of days, hast excelled them all. They, like Saul, have slain their thousands of spiritual enemies, but thou hast slain, as David, thy ten thousands. They, like the people, must worship afar off, but thou, like Moses, mayest draw near, go up into the mount. There is none like thee, whom God knoweth face to face. Well may other days say to thee, as the people to David, Thou art worth ten thousand of us. Well might the good soul run to meet thee in the morning, and salute thee with *Veni, sponsa mea*, Come, my sweet spouse, thee I have loved, for thee I have longed, and thou art my dearest delight.

Take heed of counting the Sabbath thy burden, and thine attendance upon that day on the ordinances of God thy bondage. It argued spirits full of froth and filth to cry out, 'When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell our corn; and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?' Amos viii. 5. Count religious duties not thy fetters, but thy greatest freedom.

Think what the phœnix is amongst birds, the lion among beasts, fire among the elements, that is the Lord's-day among the days. Ordinary days, like wax in a shop, have their use, are worth some-

what; but this, like wax to some deeds, or which hath the king's seal to it, is worth thousands. What is said of that day of the Lord, may in a gracious sense be spoken of the Lord's-day, 'There is none like it, before it, neither shall be after it.' Upon this day Christ carrieth the soul into his wine-cellar, and his banner over it is love; upon other days he feeds his members, upon this day he feasts them; they have their ordinary every day, but upon this day exceedings—upon this day he brings forth his living water, his best wine; on this day he gives the sweetest bread, the finest flour, the true meat, his own body. On this day he met the two disciples, and made their hearts warm, and even burn within them by the fire of his words; on this day, saints that slept arose out of their beds, their graves, Mat. xxvii.; on this day the Holy Ghost descended on the apostles; on this day the Lord brought forth the light of the world in creation; on this day Christ brought forth the light of his new heavens and new earth by his resurrection; on this day St John had his glorious revelation, containing the church's state to the world's dissolution; on this day he visited his dear apostles with grace and peace, saying to them, 'Peace be unto you, behold my hands and my feet.' On this day he burst asunder the bands of death, he broke in pieces the gates of hell, he led captivity captive, trampled upon principalities and powers, and triumphed over grave, sin, the curse of the law, and Satan. Upon this day he still rides triumphantly in the chariot of his ordinances, conquering and to conquer, casting down high thoughts, and subduing sinners to himself. It may be said of the Sabbath, as of Zion, 'This and that man was born in her, and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah,' Ps. lxxxvii. 5, 6. Oh blessed day, how many thousand souls have known thee the day of their new births! How willing have the people been in the day of God's power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dews of thy youth. Blessed art thou among days, from henceforth all generations shall call thee blessed. Blessed be the Father who made thee, blessed be the Son who bought thee, blessed be the Spirit who sanctifieth thee, and blessed are all they that prize and improve thee. Reader, thou hast not a drop of true holiness, if thou dost not bless God (as is reported of the Jews) at the coming in and going out of this holy and blessed day.

Thirdly, Consider there is a present price put into thy hands, to get and increase grace, and therefore improve it. The wisdom of a Christian consisteth in observing his seasons; the high God sends

man to school to the silly ant, to learn this art and piece of good husbandry, 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, which having no guide, overseer, nor ruler, provideth her food in the summer, and gathereth her meat in the harvest,' Prov. vi. 6–8. The ants are a feeble folk, but famous for their forecast, and deserve, saith one, to be fed with the finest of the wheat, for the pattern they give to man. They labour not only all day, but even by moonlight they gather huge heaps together, lay it out a-drying in a warm day, lest it should putrefy, and bite off the ends of the grain lest it should grow; but observe the season of this care and diligence, 'She provideth her food in the summer, and gathereth her meat in the harvest.' Then that time is the ant's opportunity, if she do it not then she cannot do it at all; therefore she makes use of that season. Oh that, friend, thou wert but as wise for the bread which came down from heaven, as this poor pismire is for the bread which springs out of the earth! Christians are called doves. The turtle dove is called in the Hebrew *Tor*, of the original *Tur*, (and thence comes our Latin *Turtur*,) which signifieth to observe or search, for so this bird observeth her time of going and coming, Jer. viii. 7, for she departeth before winter into some warm climate. The Lord's-day is the summer, thine harvest time, labour now for Christ and grace, or thou art lost for ever. The farmer that loiters at other times will work hard and sweat in harvest. If he do not reap then he knows he can never pay his rent, and feed his family, but is ruined. Reader, if thou dost not on a Lord's-day gather in grace, how wilt thou do to lay out grace in the week-days? nay, how wilt thou do to spend grace upon a dying bed, when thou art to step into the other world? 'He that gathereth in summer is a wise son, but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame,' Prov. x. 5. The Jews might gather no manna on the Sabbath, but Gentiles must then especially get the bread of life. The waterman must observe when wind and tide are for his turn, and then bestir himself, or otherwise he must come short of his haven. It concerns thee to mind Sabbaths; then the gales of the Spirit blow fair for thy voyage, then the waters of ordinances run right for the port to which thou art bound; therefore do not then laze and loiter, but labour for thy God, thy soul, and thine everlasting life: 'Therefore shall every one that is godly, seek thee in a time when thou mayest be found,' Ps. xxxii. 6.

The musician must play his lesson whilst the instrument is in tune, because the weather may alter. The good husband, for his soul, must buy of Christ gold to enrich him, and raiment to clothe

him, while the fair lasts, for it will quickly be over. Esau came too late and lost thereby the blessing; many come too late and lose their souls by it. 'To everything there is a season,' saith God, Eccles. iii. 1. The Lord's-day is thy season when grace and mercy are tendered to thee; 'how wilt thou escape if thou neglectest (or carest not for, as the word ἀμελήσαντες signifieth) so great salvation', Heb. ii. 3. Open unto Christ when he knocketh at the door of thy heart with the finger of his Spirit. Do not bid him come to-morrow, lest that morrow never come.

It is good, we say, to make hay while the sun shines, for the heavens may be cloudy. It is good to embrace a present opportunity, for time is bald behind; thou canst not assure thyself of a second Sabbath. Seasons of grace are not like tides, that a man may miss one and take another. What Christ said of himself is true of Sabbaths: 'The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always.' Time thou hast always with thee while thou livest, but the Sabbath thou hast not always. Nay, within a shorter time than thou imaginest, God may deprive thee both of time and opportunity, both of week-days and Lord's-days; and if thou art now sleeping and snoring, when thou shouldst be waking and working, what a cut will it be to thy heart to reflect upon the Sabbaths which thou hast had and lost, enjoyed and misspent! Jerusalem, in the days of her affliction and of her misery, remembered all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, Lam. i. 9. So, reader, if thou shouldst neglect to improve Sabbaths now in the day of thy misery, or rather in the everlasting night of thine affliction in hell, thou wilt remember thy Sabbath seasons of grace, and all thy pleasant things which thou hadst in the days of old. Good Lord, what a rueful, woful remembrance will it be to call to mind the means, the mercies, the helps which were afforded thee to have avoided hell and attained heaven; and yet thou, like a fool, or rather a madman, didst dally about them, and delay till the market was done! Now is the time for thee to accept of grace, because now is the only time that grace will accept of thee. 'Oh that thou wouldst know in this thy day, the things which concern thy peace, before they be hid from thine eyes.'

Fourthly, Esteem the public ordinances the chief work of the day, and let thy secret and private duties be so managed that thy soul may be prepared for them, and profited by them. Duties in thy closet and family are of use and have their blessing; but to put God off with these, and neglect the public worship, is to rob God of a greater sum, to pay him a lesser. The sacrifice of the

Jews on that day was double; they offered sacrifice in the tabernacle, besides their lambs for the daily sacrifice. It is worth your observation, that the Sabbath and public service are by God himself joined together, and therefore let no man put them asunder: 'Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary, I am the Lord,' Lev. xix. 30. They that despise God's sanctuary, cannot observe God's Sabbath.

Everything is beautiful in its season. Private duties are beautiful, and in season every day; but public ordinances are never so lovely and beautiful, because never so much in their prime and season, as on a Lord's-day.

In public worship God receiveth the highest praises: 'I will praise thee in the great congregation,' Ps. xxix. 9. 'In his temple doth every one speak of his glory. I had gone with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day Ps. xlii. 4. The gracious God is pleased to esteem it his glory to have many beggars thronging at the beautiful gate of his temple for spiritual and corporal alms. What an honour is it to our great landlord, that multitudes of tenants flock together to his house, to pay heir rent of thanks and worship for their all which they hold of him![1] How loud and lovely is the noise of many golden trumpets! Good Lord, what an echo do they make in heaven's ears! When many skilful musicians play in concert, with well-tuned and prepared instruments, the music cannot but be ravishing to God himself. Methinks it is a notable resemblance of the sweet melody which is made by the celestial choir above: Ps. lxviii. 26, 'Bless ye God in the congregation, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel: for he loveth the gates of Zion, above all the dwellings of Jacob,' Ps. lxxxvii. 2.

As in public God receiveth the highest praises, so there he bestoweth the richest mercies: 'Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple,' Ps. lxv. 4. Here is David's position and its proof. His position is, that the templer, or inhabitant in God's house, is an happy man: 'Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy house.' The proof of it is from the quality and quantity of the provision, which God makes for them that are of his household. For the

[1] Deus pluris facit preces in Ecclesia quam domi factas, non ob locum, sed ob considerationem multitudinis fidelium Deum communi consensu invocantium.—*Riv. in Cath. Orth.*

quality of it, it is not only good, but goodness; which word signifieth not only the good will which God beareth to, but all the good things which God bestoweth upon, his people: pardon, peace, love, grace, every good thing, all good things are in the womb of that one word goodness. God's provision for his people is beyond all their knowledge or apprehension.

There be four ordinary ways by which men come to the knowledge of good things: either by hearing them immediately themselves, or by hearsay from others, or by the sight of the eyes, or by discourse of reason: 'But from the beginning of the world, men have not seen, nor heard, nor perceived by the ear, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath provided for them that love him,' 1 Cor. ii. 9; Isa. lxiv. 4. The love discovered there is an unknown love; the joy bestowed there is unspeakable joy. All the costliest dainties prepared for heaven's table, the fulness of joy and pleasures for ever at God's right hand, are expressed by this one word goodness, Ps. xxxi. 19. So that the quality of the provision is beyond all exception, it is Goodness. For its quantity, it is to satisfaction: 'We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.' The saint shall have enough of this luscious fare to content him—indeed the Christian's full meal is reserved for him, till he comes to eat bread in the kingdom of heaven; but here he hath enough to stay his stomach. He is very well satisfied that his allowance in this world is sufficient. God calls him in the other world to greater work, and so will give him a greater allowance for suitable strength, but God doth not in this world under-keep him. He feeds proportionable to their employments, nay to their satisfaction and contentment, all that are in his inferior family—his children have till they leave.

But, reader, where is the place of this good, this great provision? Is it not in God's house, in his holy temple, in the public worship? Great princes bestow their largesses, and shew their bounty, glory, and magnificence, before much people. If thou wouldst know where believers have seen their best sights, where they have heard their most ravishing sounds, where they have made their most delightful meals, it was in the house of God: 'They have seen thy goings, O God, in the sanctuary,' Ps. lxviii. 24. 'They have heard the joyful sound of thy word: they have been abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house.'

Do but consider David's tears and grief for want of, and his fervent prayers for the fruition of, public ordinances, even then when

he had opportunities for private performances; and surely thou wilt esteem the ministry of the word no mean mercy. See his sorrow when he was driven from God's sanctuary: 'When I remember these things, my soul is poured out: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God,' Ps. xlii. 3, 4. My soul is poured out; that is, I am overwhelmed with grief, and even ready to die, when I compare my present condition with my former happiness, in the fruition of religious assemblies. There is an elegancy in the phrase *poured out;* the word is applied to water, or any liquid thing, and in Scripture signifieth abundance, Joel ii. 28. My life is ready to be poured out as water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again, when I remember my former mercies, and consider my present misery. How bitterly and passionately doth he plead with Saul! 'If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering; but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from the inheritance of the Lord,' 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. How pathetically doth he bemoan it to his own soul! 'Woe is me, for I dwell in Meschech, and my habitations are in the tents of Kedar.' The loss of his father, mother, wives, children, lands, liberty, nay, of his very life, would not have gone so near his heart, as the loss of public ordinances. As his sorrow was great for the want, so was his suit most earnest for the enjoyment of them. How many a prayer doth he put up for the liberty of the tabernacle! Ps. xliii. 3, 4, and xxvii. 4. It is the one thing, the principal special request which he begs of God: 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life;' and verse 8, how hard doth he pray for this privilege: 'Thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' To seek the face of God in a general sense, is taken for the substance of religion, or to seek God, Ps. xxiv. 6; but by the face of God in a strict sense, is meant the ark of God, and place of his residence. Now David at this time being deprived of this inestimable benefit, in the ardency of his zeal presseth God, with all the arguments he could devise, to restore him to that happiness; among the rest he urged God with his own words—thou hast commanded me to worship thee in thy tabernacle, to appear before thee, that is my desire and delight, my heart would seek and see thy face there. Thus he presseth God for performance on his side, that he might be enabled to obey God's precept.

Where God denieth public ordinances, there he himself will be

a little sanctuary to his chosen, Ezek. xi. 16. But where he affords them, he expects that they should be attended. Christ himself went often into the synagogues.

'Peter and John went up into the temple at the hour of prayer,' Acts iii. 1. 'On the Sabbath, we went out of the city by a river's side, where prayer was wont to be made,' Acts xiii. 23. 'And Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath,' Acts xviii. 4. Those that by their practices contemn public worship, have neither Christ nor his apostles for their pattern.

One of the Jewish rabbis hath a saying, He that dwells in a city where there is a synagogue, and cometh not to prayers, *merito dicitur vicinus malus*, is deservedly styled a bad neighbour. Reader, if thou forsakest the assemblies of the saints, how useful soever thou mayest be to others' bodies, yet thou art a bad neighbour in neglecting soul-service.

The Lord Jesus Christ, as he was faithful as a Son in his own house, took special care to provide and prepare such public servants as might give every one their meat in due season. The ministers of the word are his public officers, appointed by himself, to have the oversight of his saints. They are both fathers to beget, and tutors to bring up his sons and daughters. They are his stewards to dispense publicly the mysteries of the gospel of peace. But little do they think, who set light by public ordinances, what a price Christ paid, that he might enable and qualify them for his church's profit. The gifts he bestoweth on pastors are not the least sign of his good will to his people. Wherefore, he saith, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors; and some, teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,' Eph. iv. 8–13. As kings, on the day of their coronation, usually appear in all their majesty and magnificence, and do some famous act, (as of a general pardon or the like,) which may speak their love and respect to their subjects, so Jesus Christ, when he rode triumphantly in the chariot of his ascension into heaven's glorious city, to sit and reign there at the right hand of the Majesty on High, gave abilities to ministers, endowed them with answerable gifts and graces, that they might dispense the ordinances of God powerfully and profitably, as a special fruit of his passion for, and a singular testimony of his affection to, his church.

I would wish thee, therefore, to be present at, and to continue to the end of public ordinances. David would be a door-keeper in the house of God; because a door-keeper is first in and last out. Friend, if thou wert feasting some noble person, thou wouldst not rise from table, unless necessity forced thee, before all were taken away, and thanks returned. I must tell thee, that when thou art feeding with the blessed Potentate, it is much below good manners to turn thy back upon him, without his leave and blessing.

Fifthly, If thou wouldst make religion thy business on a Lord's-day, tune thine heart to spiritual joy and delight therein. Holy alacrity and joy is not only a crown and credit to, but also a special part of, Christianity. 'The kingdom of God consisteth not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,' Rom. xiv. 17. God's ways are not so bad but that the travellers in them may be cheerful. His work is good wages, and therefore it is no wonder that his servants are so joyful.

Because believers have ever cause of comfort, therefore they are commanded always to rejoice, Phil. iii. Whether their sins or sufferings come into their hearts, they must not sorrow as they that have no hope. In their saddest conditions, they have the Spirit of consolation. There is seed of joy sown within them when it is buried under the clods, and appears not above ground. But there are special times when God calls for this grain to spring up. They have some red letters, some holy days in the calendar of their lives, wherein this joy, as wine at a wedding, is most seasonable; but among all those days it never relisheth so well, it never tasteth so pleasantly, as on a Lord's-day. Joy suits no person so much as a saint, and it becomes no season so well as a Sabbath. Joy in God on other days is like the birds chirping in winter, which is pleasing; but joy on a Lord's-day is like their warbling tunes, and pretty notes in spring, when all other things look with a suitable delightful aspect. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made, (he that made all days, so especially this day, but what follows?) we will rejoice and be glad therein,' Ps. cxviii. 24. In which words we have the church's solace, or joy, and the season, or day of it. Her solace was great: 'We will rejoice and be glad.' Those expressions are not needless repetitions, but shew the exuberancy or high degree of their joy. The season of it: 'This is the day the Lord hath made.' Compare this place with Mat. xxi. 22, 23, and Acts iv. 11, and you will find that the precedent verses are a prophetical prediction of Christ's resurrection, and so this verse foretells the church's joy upon that memorable and glorious day. And, indeed, if 'a

feast be made for laughter,' Eccles. x. 19, then that day wherein Christ feasteth his saints with the choicest mercies may well command his greatest spiritual mirth. A thanksgiving-day hath a double precedency of a fast-day. On a fast-day we eye God's anger; on a thanksgiving-day we look to God's favour. In the former we specially mind our own corruptions; in the latter, God's compassions;—therefore, a fast-day calls for sorrow, a thanksgiving-day for joy. But the Lord's day is the highest thanksgiving-day, and deserveth, much more than the Jewish Purim, to be a day of feasting and gladness, and a good day.

On this day we enjoy the communion of saints, and shall we not delight in those excellent ones? Ps. xvi. 3. On this day we have fellowship with the blessed Saviour, and shall we not sit under his shadow with great delight? Cant. i. On this day we are partakers of the ordinances of God, and shall we not be joyful in the house of prayer? Isa. lvi. 7. On this day we have special converse with the God of ordinances, and who would not draw water with joy out of the well of salvation? Isa. xii. 3. Surely whilst we are in the midst of so much musk we must needs be perfumed. Who can walk where the sun shines so hot and not be warmed?

It is God's precept, as well as thy privilege, to make God's day thy delight. 'If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord,' Isa. lviii. 13. Delights, Tremel. reads it, *thy delicate things*, according to the Septuagint. Whether thou art meditating on God's works, or attending on God's word, which are the two principal duties of the day, they both call for delight and joy.

If on this day of rest thou considerest the work of creation and God's rest, it behoveth thee to follow David's pattern, 'Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works; I will triumph in the works of thy hands,' Ps. xcii. 4.

If thou considerest the work of redemption, and Christ's rest, surely out of the carcase of the lion of the tribe of Judah thou mayest get such honey as may delight thy soul, and force thee to sing, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour,' Luke i. 46, 47. The babe in the womb leaped for joy of him before he was born. The heavenly host sung at his birth, and wilt not thou at his second birth, his resurrection from the dead? O let primitive Christians' salutations be thy consolation, 'The Lord is risen.'

If thou meditatest on glorification and thine own rest, canst thou do less than rejoice in hope of glory? What prisoner, shackled with Satan's temptations, and fettered with his own corruptions, in the

dark jail of this world, can think of the time when his irons shall be knocked off, and he enjoy the pleasant light and glorious liberty of the sons of God, and not be transported with joy? What heir in his minority, banished from his kindred and country, can think without comfort of his full age, when he shall have the full fruition both of his estate and friends? Doubtless, friend, the Sabbaths of the holy are the suburbs of heaven. In heaven there is no buying, no selling, no ploughing, no sowing, nothing but worshipping God, communion with him, fruition of him, and delight in him. There remains a rest for the people of God. There they rest from their labours. If thou on a Lord's-day turnest thy back upon the world, and goest up into the mount, conversing with, and rejoicing in the blessed God, what dost thou less than begin thine eternal Sabbath here? Such a Lord's-day can be no less than heaven in a looking-glass, representing truly, though darkly, thy future eternal happiness. There is no perfume so sweet to a pilgrim as his own smoke.

When thou art attending on the word, truly that *aqua vitæ*, that hot water may well revive thy spirit. 'Thy testimonies are my delight,' saith David. 'I have rejoiced more in thy testimonies than in all manner of riches,' Ps. cxix. 24, 77. The word of God is sometimes called a treasure, and what beggar would not rejoice in a treasure? Sometimes fire; and truly, reader, thine heart is frozen to purpose if this fire do not heat it. Solomon tells us, 'As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country,' Prov. xxv. 25. The word of God contains the best news that ever was heard, 'Peace on earth, good will towards men;' and the glad tidings of the gospel come from heaven, a far country. What canst thou say then, why they should not be as welcome and refreshing to thee as cold water to a thirsty soul?

Variety of things that are excellent is not a little ground of complacency in them; variety of choice voices please the ear; variety of curious colours delight the eyes; variety of dainties are acceptable to the taste. Nero promised rewards to them that invented new pleasures. God hath for that purpose dished out his worship into several and various duties, that it might be more pleasant to us. Sometimes we speak to God; sometimes we hear from God; sometimes we are praying for supply of our necessities; sometimes we are praising him for his infinite excellencies; sometimes our mouths are open to sing; sometimes our ears are open to hear the sermon; sometimes our eyes are open to see the sacrament. The same meat is dressed several ways to make it the

more welcome, and so the more strengthening to us. Hippocrates observes, that that food which nature receives with delight, though not so good in itself, affords better nourishment than that which is more wholesome, against which nature hath a reluctancy. Reader, thy delight and pleasure in the sacred ordinances of the Lord's-day will help to make them more profitable to thee. Some colours which do delight, do also strengthen the sight.

Sixthly, If thou wouldst make godliness thy business on a Lord's-day, let no duty satisfy without communion with God in it. Ordinances are the galleries and gardens (and for that end appointed) wherein God and thy soul may walk together. For this cause they are called a glass, because therein the Christian beholds the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18. As Zaccheus climbed up the sycamore-tree to see Jesus, and when he once had a sight of him, he came down joyfully; so go thou up into the trees of duties for this purpose, that thou mayest see God in Christ, and unless this be granted thee, come down sorrowfully. When men go to meet a friend at a certain place, and they miss him, how discontentedly they do go away!

Alas! what are the ordinances without God, but as a table without meat, from which a living soul must needs depart thirsty and hungry? David loved the habitation of God's house, but it was because it was the place where God's honour dwelt, Ps. xxvii. David longed for the courts of God, more than for his crown, relations, or possessions, or any outward comforts; but it was because God afforded there his gracious presence. God's glorious presence is in his church triumphant, but he is graciously present in his church militant. 'My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God,' Ps. lxxxiv. 2. His desire was as eager and earnest as of a longing woman with child, who is ready to faint away and die if she be not satisfied. Sometimes he compares his desire to thirst, of which creatures are more impatient than hunger, Ps. lxiii. 1.; sometimes to the thirst of an hart after the water-brooks, which creature being naturally hot and dry in a very great degree, is exceedingly thirsty; but the object of his desire, of his thirst, was God: 'My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: Oh, when shall I come and appear before him?' Ps. xlii. 1, 2. 'To see thy beauty and glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.' It was communion with God in his life and love, in his graces and comforts, which the psalmist so much longed for. The sweet smile of God's face, the honey dews of his Spirit, were David's paradise of pleasure, his heaven upon earth.

They that come to duty merely for duty, know not what it means to meet with God, and therefore though they neither see his face nor hear his voice, yet are contented: like those that were born in some dark dungeon, and never yet saw the sun, they are well enough satisfied without it; but those who have seen it, and know that that light is pleasant, if they look up to the heaven of ordinances, and see not the Sun of Righteousness, it is no longer day with them. The true disciples met together the first day of the week, and enjoying Jesus among them, rejoiced indeed; but they are only glad in duties, when they had seen the Lord, John xx. 20. 'They were glad when they had seen the Lord.'

Reader, when thou goest to the ordinances of God, go to meet God in the ordinances. As Moses, go up into the mount of duties to converse with thy Maker. Go to view the beauty of his face when thou inquirest into his holy temple. When thou goest to prayer, let it be in hope to get thy heart nearer to heaven.

When thou goest to hear, mind communion with him that speaks from heaven, and then only rejoice in the word, when, as the star to the wise men, it leads thee to the place where Christ is. It is God in the word which causeth efficacy, it is God in prayer who causeth prevalency, it is God in the sacrament who causeth alacrity, it is God in a Sabbath who causeth complacency.

When thou goest to the waters of the sanctuary, say as Elisha at the waters of Jordan, 'Where is the Lord God of Elijah?' Where is the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ? Why is thy chariot, O Sun of Righteousness, so long a coming? Why tarry? What clogs the wheels of thy chariot? 'Oh, when wilt thou come unto me?' Ps. ci. 2. When thou comest from the ordinances, and hast not met God in them, though thou hast showed never so great parts or gifts, or outward devotion, say as Absalom, 'All this avails me nothing, so long as I may not see the king's face,' 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. Saul himself was sad and sorrowful, when 'he inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him not.' And canst thou, O saint, be joyful, when thy beloved hath withdrawn himself?

Look upon performances as boats to ferry thy soul over, and give it a passage to God, and take heed of going contentedly from God without God: let thy prayer be, 'Oh send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill, to thy tabernacle: then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy,' Ps. xliii. 3, 4.

Seventhly, Sanctify the whole day to God's service; be early up in the morning, and as late as thy body will permit at night. The

Israelites, when they were to batter down the strongholds of Jericho, 'rose up early in the morning,' Josh. vi. 15. Upon the Lord's-day thy work must be to batter down the strongholds of sin; rise early, lose no time, do not lose the least moment, if it be possible, of this sacred day. The very filings of gold are of worth; the smallest part of this holy day is of great price. The word *shamur*, to keep the Sabbath, Lev. xix. 30, signifieth to keep with care and diligence, as a great treasure, of which a man would lose none. When men beat ginger, they will (if good husbands) be careful that little fly out of the mortar; but if they beat pearl, they are extraordinary watchful that not the least of that be lost, because a little of that is of great value. Reader, if thou art a good husband for thy soul, I doubt not but thou esteemest thy time in the week-days at so high a rate, that thou darest not squander it away in doing nothing, or in that which is worse than nothing; but oh, what worth, what price wilt thou set upon an opportunity upon a Lord's-day! How diligent wilt thou be to improve the least piece of that day! God giveth thee six whole days for thine own works; do not deny to him one whole day in seven. Let thy conscience be judge. Is it not unrighteousness to buy by one measure, which is greater, and sell by another measure, which is lesser? When the day is consecrated to God as the goods of Ananias, it is dangerous to keep back any part of it for our own use.

Do thou all the day long live and walk as it were in the other world; make it a Sabbath, a day of rest—(1.) From sin and wickedness: this is thy duty every day, but especially on this day: every sin on a Sabbath is double, the season is a great aggravation of the sin. The wicked indeed 'are like the raging sea, which cannot rest, but every day bubble up mire and dirt,' Isa. lvii. 20. (2.) From the world and the works of thy calling: 'Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people,' Exod. xxxi. 14. The Jews were to rest from works of least importance, as gathering sticks—he that fetched in sticks, was sent out of the world with stones,—and of greatest concernment, as building the tabernacle; and though the Christian now hath more liberty, yet he hath no leave at all to pollute the day by wickedness, or to profane the day by any earthly work, which might have been done before the day, or may be done as well after it.

May I not say to thee of this day, as Elisha to Gehazi: 'Is this a time to receive money, and garments, and sheep, and oxen, and

men-servants, and maid-servants?' 2 Kings v. 26. Is the Sabbath a time for civil affairs? The Sabbath-day is therefore called 'a day of restraint,' Deut. xvi. 8, because then men are forbidden all work, saith Junius. As none were ever losers by laying aside their own works to attend God's worship, he took care of Israel's safety whilst they were in his service, that none of their neighbours, though bitter enemies, should so much as desire their cities, Exod. xxxiv. 24. So none, I am confident, were ever gainers by inching in some part of their callings unnecessarily at the end of God's day, and, by setting God aside, to serve themselves; the very time will be a canker to consume their estates. And as they that take crocus into their stomachs, bring up not only ill humours, but that also which would prove good nourishment; so some have had experience, that their profanation of God's day to increase their estates, hath forced them to vomit up the whole. God hath given thee days enough for thy calling, space enough to mind it in, thou needest not trespass upon his holy day, upon his holy ground. It was no small aggravation of Adam's sin, that though he had choice of fruits, he would eat only of the forbidden fruit; so it will much increase thy sin, if when thou hast choice of time for thy trade, thou shouldest meddle with it on a Sabbath.

Reader, as thy duty is to rest the whole day from wickedness and worldly work,[1] so also to employ the whole day in God's worship, be either praying, or reading, or hearing, or singing, or meditating, or discoursing with others about the works or word of God. Be always taken up either with public, private, or secret duties. In the ninety-second Psalm, that psalm for the Sabbath, ver. 1 and 3, we are exhorted to 'shew forth God's loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness at evening.'[2] Now we know that in Scripture sense the morning and the evening are the whole day; the whole day is God's by ordination, and why should it not be his by observation. God hath dedicated this day wholly to his own worship; now every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord, Lev. xxvii. 28.

The pope and church of Rome have half-holidays, as St Blacy's day, which is holy in the forenoon only; but God and the church of Christ have no half-holidays. Observe how exact God is in expressing a whole natural day: 'From evening to evening you shall keep the Sabbath,' Lev. xxiii. 32. Their days were reckoned

[1] Debet totus dies festivus à Christiano expendi in operibus bonis.—*Grostete in precept.*

[2] Hoc sensu loquitur propheta, Si à primo mane incipimus laudare Deum, continuandas esse ejus laudes ad ultimam noctis partem.—*Calv. in loc.*

from evening to evening, from the creation; but ours, because Christ rose in the morning, from morning to morning.

If thou hast any sincere delight in God, and esteem of the true riches, I cannot but think that thou wilt be covetous of the smallest part of God's day, and wish, as R. Jose,[1] that thy portion may be to begin the Sabbath with those of Tiberias, because they began it sooner than others; and to end it with those of Tsepphore, because they continued it longer than others. If thy soul ever met God on a Sabbath, thou wilt surely be ready to say with Joshua, 'Thou sun, stand still in Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Aijalon,' Josh. x. 12. Oh that the day were longer, that I might have more time to fight the Lord's battles against my spiritual enemies!

Eighthly, If thou wouldst make religion thy business on a Lord's-day, meditate therein on the word and works of God. Consider his works, this is part of the work of the day. David, in that psalm for the Sabbath, gives thee a pattern: 'O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep,' Ps. xcii. 5. It is a dishonour to a workman to make excellent pieces, and to manifest abundance of skill, and art, and ingenuity, and then not to have them taken notice of. God hath done his mighty works to be remembered and wondered at. It is said of Pythagoras that he lived sequestered from men in a cave for a whole year together, that he might meditate on the abstruse points of philosophy. I wish thee to an easier and pleasanter task, to sequester thyself some time every Lord's-day, to ponder the infinite perfections which appear in the operations of his hand. God will be both admired and magnified by his people on earth as well as in heaven, which none can do but those that seriously consider his works. Men have been much wondered at for some peculiar rare works, though in them a Christian should look further, even to God, the author of their skill and wisdom. The very Greeks acknowledged somewhat like this, that all arts come from God, in making Minerva the daughter of Jupiter, and to have had her generation in his divine brain; but alas, the choicest pieces of men to the smallest works of God are but as children's houses of dirt to the stateliest courts of Christendom. Archites was much extolled for causing a dove of wood to hang in the air, being equally poised with its own weight; but what is this to the work of God in hanging the earth upon nothing? Job xxvi. 7. The earth is the heaviest and lowest element. A little piece of earth held up and let fall will never

[1] Jewish Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 3. Ex. Buxtorf. Comment. mas.

cease moving till it come to rest upon some solid body; and yet behold, the great mass of earth, with innumerable bodies upon it, hangs fast in the midst of the open air, having no visible pillar nor foundation to rest upon. Well might God reckon it to Job among his wondrous works, Job xxxviii. 4–6, 'Upon what be the sockets of it fastened?' Aristotle himself could not but admire it. Archimedes was famous for contriving the motions of the sun, moon, and stars in his horology; but alas, what is this to the glorious heavens themselves, which God stretched out like a curtain, and to the noble host of great and glittering bodies, keeping their rank and file, and being not only incredibly swift, but also regularly and orderly in their motions? 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.' There is so much of God appearing in the heavens, that many have taken them for God, and given them divine worship. Naturalists tell us that the head of Nilus cannot be found, but many sweet springs issuing from it are discovered. Though thy finite capacity can never reach fully the fountain and head, God's infinite being and excellencies, yet thou mayest find many refreshing streams which flow from it. A little river will lead thee to the ocean! Oh, how much of the goodness, power, and wisdom of God appeareth in the work of creation! The rabbis say that in every apex of the law there is a mountain of sense; sure I am that in the smallest creatures there is abundance of the Creator. How doth the wisdom of God shine forth in the exquisite workmanship, variety, order, subordination, and serviceableness of the creatures one to another, that David might well cry out, 'O Lord, how marvellous are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.'

Pontanus,[1] chancellor of Saxony, propoundeth to be viewed and weighed the most beautiful archwork of heaven resting upon no post but God's power, and yet standing fast for ever. The clouds as thin as the liquor contained in them; behold, saith he, how they hang and move, though weighty in their burden; they salute us only, or threaten us rather, and pass we know not whither. How doth his goodness appear in furnishing the world so richly for the supply of his creatures! 'The earth is full of thy goodness.' Luther, in his *Colloquia Mens.*, tells us that God is at more charge every day to maintain sparrows than all the yearly revenues of the king of France are worth; but especially towards man, in making him so excellent a creature, and in making so many excellent creatures for him.

[1] Scultet. Anal.

His power is also evident both in creating such great and noble creatures of nothing—he used not the least tool or instrument in making the heavens and earth—and in having them all at his beck and bidding, at his call and command; the greatest do him homage, and the smallest do him service. The sun, as strong and swift as he is—moving, as some write, every hour 16,000 miles—yet he flies back like a coward if God speak but the word, Josh. x. 12; Job ix. 5–10. He armeth flies and lice, and what execution did they do upon the Egyptians!

Cambden[1] tells us the arms of the Shagburies in Warwickshire, being stars, are found engraven in the very stones within their manor of Shagbury. Whether that be true or no, I know not; but sure I am that the arms of the infinite God, his eternal power, manifold wisdom, and matchless goodness, are so plainly written on his works in the world, in that first volume of creation, that he that runs may read them. Solomon tells us, God hath set the world in men's hearts—namely, that the skilfulness of the workman may be admired in the exactness of his works, Eccles. iii. 11.

I might draw thee further, and show thee (but that I would not be so large) how these glorious perfections of God are printed in a larger letter, in a fairer character, in the second volume, the work of redemption. This is the object of angels' admiration, and ought to be of thy meditation.

Truly thy duty is to read God in the first book, the book of the creatures; and more especially in the second, in Jesus Christ, upon his own day.

Thy meditation of God's works, as it will give honour to God, so it will not a little further thy spiritual good. When David considered the work of creation, he falls presently upon exalting God, and debasing himself: Ps. viii. 1–4, 'When I consider the heavens, the work of thy hands, the moon and the stars which thou hast made, O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, and thy glory above the heavens.' There he sets God up high, but then he casts himself down low: 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou dost thus visit him?'

When thine heart is like wax hardened, bring it by meditation to the warm beams of this sun, and they will soften it.

So when David considered the work of redemption, how doth he magnify God and vilify himself: 'What am I? and what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me up hitherto? and

[1] Camb. Britan.

yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come,' 1 Chron. xvi. 16, 17. O friend, as rubbing the limbs with hot oils is a great means to recover them when they are benumbed, so when thy heart is dull and dead, on a Lord's-day, if thou wouldst but ply it with the meditation of the infinite love and goodness of God in sending his Son to die for thy soul, it would be a sovereign means to quicken and revive it.

Consider also the word of God which thou hast heard on that day; do thou, like Mary, ponder it in thine heart. Meditation to the word is what fire is to water; though water be naturally so cold, yet put fire under it, and it will make it hot and boiling; so, though thine heart be cold in regard of affection to the word, put but this fire under it, and it will boil with love to it. 'Oh, how love I thy law!' There is his heat of affection, (the expression is both by way of interrogation and acclamation, shewing the fervency and intention of his love,) but what was the fire which caused it? 'It is my meditation all the day,' Ps. cxix.

The reason why some men profit so little by the word is, want of meditation. If a man eat his food, and as soon as it is in his stomach vomit it up again, it is no wonder if he get little strength by it, or if he pine and consume away. Truly, if sermons enter in at one ear and out at the other, making no stay with thee, I shall not marvel if they work no change in thee.

CHAPTER XXII.

Brief directions for the sanctification of the Lord's-day from morning to night.

Reader, besides those general directions which I have largely insisted on, I shall annex here some short directions how thou mayest spend a Lord's-day, from the beginning to the end of it, as may be most for the honour of God and the furthering thine own everlasting good.

1. Be sure thou takest some pains with thy heart the afternoon (or evening at least) before, to prepare thy soul for the ensuing Sabbath. As our whole life should be a preparation for death, yet the nearer we draw to the night of our dissolution, the more gloriously (as the setting sun) we should shine with holiness; so in the whole week we should be preparing for the Lord's-day; but

the more the day doth approach, the more our preparation must increase. The bigger the vessel is, the more water may be carried from the fountain. According to the measure of the sacks which the patriarchs carried to Joseph, so were they filled with corn by Joseph; preparation doth not only fit the heart for grace, but also widen the heart that it may receive much of the Spirit of God. Some servants when they are to bake in the morning put their wood in the oven overnight, and thereby it burneth both the sooner and the better. Men make much the more riddance of their work, who, being to travel a great journey, load their carts, or put up their things, and lay them ready overnight. If thou art a Christian, thy experience will tell thee that after thou hast on a Saturday called thyself to account for thy carriage on the foregoing week, bewailed thy miscarriages before the Lord; in particular, thy playing the truant on former Lord's-days, when thou shouldst have been learning those lessons which Christ hath set thee in his law, and hast been earnest with God for pardon of thy sins, and a sanctified improvement of the approaching Sabbath,—I say, thy experience cannot but teach thee that thy profit after such preparation will make thee abundant amends for thy pains; and that thou hast the best visits, the sweetest kisses, when thy lips, thy heart, are thus made clean beforehand.

2. If the weakness of thy body do not hinder, rise earlier on the Lord's-day than ordinary. When the Israelites were encompassing Jericho, on the seventh day, they rose early in the morning; and, according to many expositors, it was on the Sabbath-day the walls of Jericho fell down, Joshua vi. 15. One main work which thou hast to do on a Lord's-day is to batter down the strongholds of sin, to conquer those Canaanites which would keep thee out of the promised land; do thou rise early for this end. He that riseth and setteth out early goeth a considerable part of his way before others awake. It is sordid to lie lazying and to turn upon thy bed as a door on the hinges (and never the farther off) upon any day, but most sad and sinful on a Lord's-day.

3. When thou first awakest turn up thy heart to God in praise for his protection the night past, for the light of another day, especially of his own day; and in prayer for the light of his countenance, and for assistance in every duty, and his direction throughout the day. As thou art rising, if no other more profitable subject offer itself to thy thoughts, meditate how the night is spent, the day is at hand; it concerneth thee therefore to put off the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light. When thou

thinkest on the nakedness of thy body, how unseemly it would be for thee to walk up and down without raiment, do not forget the nakedness of thy soul by sin, and how uncomely thou art in the sight of God, without the robes of Christ's righteousness, and the graces of the Holy Ghost.

4. When thou art dressed, let nothing hinder thee from thy secret devotion. When thou art in thy closet, consider of the price which God hath put into thy hand, the value and worth of a Lord's-day, the weight and concernment of the duties therein, and the account thou art ere long to give for every Sabbath and season of grace. These thoughts, as heavy weights on a clock, would make thee move more swiftly in the work of the day. After some time spent in meditation, in some short yet reverent and hearty petitions, entreat God's help in the present and subsequent duties of the day; after which read some portion of the Scripture, and pour out thy soul in prayer. Get thy heart effectually possessed with this truth, that God must work his own work in thee and for thee, or it will never be done; that, as the Spirit moved on the waters at first, and then the living creatures were formed, so the Spirit must move upon the waters of ordinances before they can produce or increase spiritual life. Hereby thou wilt be stirred up to more fervent supplication for, and more importunate expectation of, help from heaven. In thy prayers remember all the assemblies of the saints that they may see God's beauty, power, and glory, as they have sometimes beheld them in his sanctuary. Entreat God to clothe his ordinances with his own strength, that they may be mighty through him for the bringing in and building up many souls. In special, when thou art at prayer, think of the preachers of the gospel; conceive that thou hearest every one of them speaking to thee, as Paul to his Romans, 'I beseech thee, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,' Rom. xv. 30. Their work is of infinite weight; it is God-work, soul-work, temple-work. Not one of them but may say, with Nehemiah, on a Lord's-day, upon much greater reason, 'Oh, I am doing a great work,' Neh. vi. 3. Their opposition is great. The devil will do what may be to hinder them; the world hates them; their own hearts will disturb them; their strength is small; their graces are weak. Alas, what can they do? Oh, therefore, pray for them.

5. After thy secret duties thou mayest, if nature require, refresh thy body with convenient food. Thy God alloweth thee to cherish, though not to overcharge thy outward man. I shall speak to thy

carriage about eating and drinking in the twenty-third chapter, and therefore omit it here.[1]

6. In the next place, it will be fit that thou call thy family together, and enter upon family duties. Namely, to read the word of God, to call upon the name of God, and to sing to the praise of God.

7. Let as many of thy family as can conveniently be spared accompany thee to public ordinances.[2] Remember the command, 'Thou, thy son, thy daughter, thy man-servant and maid-servant, and all within thy gate.' Do not pamper their bodies, and starve the souls of thy household. It is recorded of Dr Chaterton, master of Emmanuel College, that he never caused any of his servants to stay at home on a Lord's-day, barely to dress meat; be able to say with Cornelius, who feared the Lord with all his house, 'We are all here present before God.'

8. As thou art going to the place of public ordinances, consider with thyself, that thou art going to converse, not with men, but with God; even with that God who searcheth the heart, who will not be mocked, and who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, that thou mayest hereby be quickened unto uprightness and seriousness, and to dart up some ejaculatory prayer to God for aid and assistance.

9. In every part of public worship, carry thyself with reverence, humility, love, faith, and sincerity. Hear, sing, pray, receive the sacrament, as one that doth all in God's sight, as one that is working for his immortal soul, and as one that within a few days shall enter the gates of death, and never have a season more for such sacred duties. Depart not from the church till all be done. In a court of civil judicature, thou wilt stay till the court riseth; if thou wouldst have God's blessing with thee, do not leave it behind thee. As thou comest from the church, meditate on what thou hast heard, chew that meat which the minister hath put into thy mouth, thereby thou mayest get much spiritual nourishment.

10. When thou art come home, usually let nothing hinder from prayer, either in thy family or closet, wherein I would advise thee to turn the heads of the sermon and chapters read into petitions, as also to beg pardon of thy wanderings in the worship of God, and beseech him who with his own hand wrote the law in two tables, that he would write the word read and preached in the tables of thine heart.

11. At dinner take heed of excess, whereby thy body will be

[1] *Vide* Family Duties, in chap. 27.

[2] *Vide* more of this, in chap. 27.

unfitted to serve thy soul; yet do not pinch or punish thy body, because the day is a day of joy and delight; I would wish thee to watch thy heart and tongue all the day long, but especially at meals, that thou mayest not think thine own thoughts, nor speak thine own words. If thyself or others start any unseasonable or earthly discourse at table, give conscience leave to speak to thee, as Judas to the apostles, 'What needeth this waste?' what needeth this waste of precious time, of so rich a treasure as every part of this day is? Let the first dish at table be God's—I mean when a blessing is desired, let presently some savoury discourse be offered; hereby sin may be prevented. The Jews had two notable defeats on the Sabbath-day, because they would not defend themselves; the first defeat was by Antiochus, the second by Pompey the Great.[1] Reader, if thou wouldst not have Satan to foil thee on a Lord's-day, keep a strict watch over thy thoughts, words, and works. After dinner, as time will give leave, either sing or pray with thy family, or repeat what thou hast heard, or busy thyself in godly conference, chiefly about what was read or preached that morning.

12. Neglect not afternoon ordinances. Some persons are like some physicians, forenoon men; they must be sought to in the morning only, if you would find them about religious duties. Friend, if thy soul ever met thy Saviour in public duties, thou canst not but love and prize them at a high rate. In the close of the day sometimes God sendeth in the chief blessing of the day. A Sabbath tide hath brought in many a good draught of fish. Be present at, and serious in, public ordinances. As an error in the first concoction can never be mended in the second, so an error or carelessness in public, cannot be mended by carefulness in private.

13. When thou returnest from public ordinances, take some time to meditate on the word or works of God; thou mayest read over the eighth particular in the twenty-first chapter to help thee therein.

14. Do not lessen thy secret or private duties on that day, let them rather be increased than diminished. The offering under the gospel was prophesied to be greater than under the law. Under the law one lamb was to be offered; under the gospel six lambs, Num. xxviii.; Ezek. xlvi.

15. Call thy children and servants to account what they have learned that day, and explain what they understand not; hereby thou wilt benefit both thyself and others. Chemnitius[2] observeth that our blessed Saviour in the 4th of Mark, and 14th of Luke,

[1] Josephus, lib. xii. cap. 8, and lib. xiv. cap. 8.

[2] Examen. de Dieb. Fest.

after he had instructed the people as a public preacher on the Sabbath-day, did examine and teach his apostles as a private master of a family.

16. At evening, sing, pray, and if thou canst, repeat the heads at least of both the sermons. Plutarch reporteth of a river which runneth sweet in the morning, and bitter at night. Let it not be said of thee, that thy morning was like Nebuchadnezzar's image, of gold, and thy evening like the feet of it, of clay.

17. Before thou goest to rest, examine thyself what thou hast got or lost that day. Reflect upon the carriage of thy heart in the several duties, as also what welcome thou hadst at the throne of grace; what covered dishes were brought thee by the Spirit from God's own table; that accordingly thou mayest beg pardon or return praise. If thou hast been melted with God's affection, obtained any strength against thy corruptions, or received any degree of grace, take heed of ascribing the glory to thyself. In Justinian's law it was decreed, that no workmen should set up his name within the body of that building which he made out of another man's cost. If thou didst pray, or hear, or sing, or read, or meditate with any life or delight, seriousness or sincerity, in any measure agreeable to his word and will, all was from God; there was not a stone used by thee towards this spiritual building, but it was taken out of his quarry. As he is the author, so let him have the honour.

18. Be watchful over thyself at the latter end of the day, with all imaginable circumspection, that the last part of the day may be the best part of the day. Some soldiers prevail in the day, but lose all again at night, because they are slothful when their quarters are beaten up by their enemies. Some lose again at night what they got in the day; like Hannibal, they know how to obtain a victory, but not to improve a victory. Usually the evenings are cold, though the days are hot.

19. As orators at the close of their speech, use all their art and skill to move the affections of their auditors, so at the close of the Lord's-day, put forth all thy grace and spiritual strength, to prevail with God for a blessing. Say of the Sabbath, as Jacob to the angel, I will not let thee go without a blessing.

20. Labour to keep the influence of the Lord's-day ordinances warm upon thy spirit all the week after; let not thy devotion pass away with the day. Some children, when they put on new shoes on a Sabbath, are very careful to keep them clean, are unwilling to set their feet to the ground for fear of dirt, but in the week-days will run up to the ankles in water or mire. Oh, let not children's

play be thy earnest, but endeavour that thy practices in secret and private, in thy calling, and in all companies on the week-days, may be answerable to the great privileges which thou didst enjoy, and the grace which thou didst receive, on the Lord's-day.

A good wish about the Lord's-day, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The first day of the week being of divine institution, and baptized by God himself with that honourable name of the Lord's-day, partly in regard of its author, 'This is the day which the Lord hath made;' partly in regard of the blessed Redeemer, who rose that day, and triumphed over the grave, the devil, the curse of the law, and hell; it being a day sanctified for the glory of my Saviour, of which I may say as of Jacob, 'The Lord hath chosen it to himself for his peculiar treasure,' Ps. cxxxv. 4, and a day set apart for the spiritual and eternal good of my precious soul, wherein I may enjoy communion with my God in all his ordinances, without interruption, I wish, in general, that as the Spirit may be in me in the week-days, so that I may be in the Spirit on the Lord's-day, filled therewith, and enabled thereby to have my conversation all the day long in heaven. Oh that my care in fitting my soul for it, my holy carriage at it, and my suitable conversation after it, may testify that I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness; and that I esteem one day in his courts better than a thousand elsewhere. I wish, in particular, that I may prepare for it as for a wedding-day, wherein Christ and my soul are to be espoused together; and to that end, before it cometh, may be careful so to order my earthly affairs, that they may not encroach upon this holy ground; and so open the door of my heart, and adorn it with spiritual excellencies, that the King of glory may enter in, and think himself a welcome guest in my soul. Oh that I might never give my God cause to complain of me, as once of the Jews, 'Your Sabbaths and solemn feasts I cannot away with, for your hands are defiled.' As Nehemiah shut the gates of the city, that no burdens might be carried in on the Sabbath-day, so let me secure the gate of my heart, that no worldly things may disturb me in Sabbath duties. Oh let me not, like Martha, be careful and troubled about many things, but on this day especially sit at Christ's feet, mind the one thing necessary, and choose the good part which shall never be taken from me. I wish that I may long

more for it than ever a bridegroom did for his bride; that when it is come in, I may bid it heartily welcome, and that as my Saviour rose early that morning to justify me, so I may rise early on this day to glorify him.

I desire that this holy day may be a high day in my account, both because the Lord of the Sabbath hath separated it to sacred uses, and because it is the day of his resurrection, whence so much good cometh to my soul. By his passion he laid down the price of my redemption; but by his rising again—the judge of quick and dead sending his officer, an angel, to roll away the stone, open the prison door, and let him out—he manifesteth to the world that the debt is discharged, and the law fully satisfied. Oh, of what value should this day be to me! My Redeemer's humiliation indeed was like Joseph's imprisonment, but his delivery out of the grave, like Joseph's enlargement and preferment, whereby he came into a capacity to advance and enrich all his relations.

I pray that I may look on this day as a special season to sow to the Spirit in, and improve it accordingly. I believe that my God will not hold him guiltless that takes his name, or spends his day, in vain. Oh let me not, like a foolish child, play by that candle which is set up for me to work by, lest I go to the bed of my grave in the dark of sin and sorrow. I wish that I may not neglect either secret or family duties on this sacred day; but yet that I may so perform them that they may be helps, not hindrances to public ordinances; that since God loveth the gates of Zion above all the dwellings of Jacob, I may set a high price upon, and have an ardent love to, the habitation of God's house, and the place where his honour dwelleth: that as a true child of my heavenly Father, I may love most, and like best, that milk which is warm from the breasts of public ordinances. I wish that I may call the Lord's-day my delight, it being a day wherein I enter into the suburbs of the holy city, and begin that work of praising, pleasing, and enjoying my God, which I hope to be employed in to eternity: that it may be my meat and drink to do the will of my God. Oh that I might so savour the things of the Spirit, and so taste the Lord to be gracious, that love may be the loadstone to draw me to my closet, family, and to church; and season every service I am called to upon the Sabbath,. Because every part of this day is of great price, more worth than a whole world, I desire that not the least moment of it may be squandered away, but (as the disciples after the miracle of loaves) I may gather up with care and conscience the smallest fragments, that nothing be lost. My God giveth me good measure,

heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, and running over; why should I be niggardly to him, (to myself, indeed, for it is my profit, not his,) when he is so liberal, so bountiful to me? I wish in regard the blessed God is not only the master, but also the marrow of his day, that no Lord's-day may satisfy me without the Lord of the day. Alas! what is the best time, without the rock of eternity? what is the best day without the Ancient of days? what are the ordinances of God without the God of ordinances? what are Sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, and seasons of grace, without the dearest Saviour, but as broken cisterns, glorious dreams, or gilded nothings? I have read of a good soul, who answered his friend, Speak to me while you will, no words can satisfy, except you mention Christ; write to me what you will, it will not satisfy, except in your letters I may read Christ. Oh that in no sermon I might be contented till I hear Christ, and that in no chapter I might be pleased till I can read Christ. That as the needle touched with the loadstone never resteth till it turn to the north, so my heart may be restless in holy duties till it turneth to, and hath fellowship with, the Lord of heaven. The Lord's-day is an excellent resemblance of my future blessedness, wherein I shall enjoy my Saviour fully, and my God shall be all in all to me. Lord, let never this day pass without some taste of those celestial pleasures. Meditation on the works and word of my God, being a duty most in its prime and season on a Sabbath-day, I beg that what time I spare from public, private, or secret performances, I may employ to this purpose, that I may behold my God to be infinite in wisdom, power, and goodness in his footsteps of creation, and stand amazed at that rare workmanship, those curious contrivances of his (which angels look into with admiration) that appear in his masterpiece, that work of redemption; and for his word, let my heart be able to say with David, 'O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.'

I wish that I may watch over my thoughts, words, and actions, all the day long; in special, that as when the holy things belonging to the sanctuary were to be removed, they were covered all over, lest any dust should soil them; so I may cover my heart with such circumspection that no dust of sin may cleave to it. Oh that I might be so wise and watchful, that there may not be the least minute of the day wherein I may not either do, or receive some good. Lord, let no Sabbath pass without some saving good to my precious soul.

I desire, finally, that I may not lose the heat of the day in the cool of the evening. I mean that what good I gain from my God

through his ordinances in the day, may not be lost by my negligence at night; but that as a wise commander, I may then double my guard, and expect with much importunity, some evening dews of comfort and grace. Oh that I might so keep the Sabbath of my God, choose the things that please him, and take hold of his covenant, that I might so turn away my foot from the Sabbath, from doing my pleasure on his holy day, and call the Sabbath my delight, the holy of the Lord, that I may have, with the eunuch, within the house of my God, a name better than of sons and daughters, even an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Amen. Isa. lvi. 4, 5, lviii. 13.

A good wish to the Lord's-day.

Hail thou that art highly favoured of God, thou map of heaven, thou golden spot of the week, thou market-day of souls, thou day-break of eternal brightness, thou queen of days, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among days, Luke i. 28. I may say to thee what the angel said to Daniel, Oh day greatly beloved! Dan. ix. 23. Thou art fairer than all the children of time, grace is poured into thy lips; God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows, Ps. xlv. Of the Jewish Sabbaths and other festivals, in comparison of thee it may be spoken, They perish, but thou remainest, and they all wax old as a garment; and as a vesture hast thou folded them up, and they are changed, but thou shalt (maugre the malice of men and devils) continue the same, and thy years shall not fail, Heb. i. 11, 12. As the temple succeeded and exceeded the tabernacle, this was fleeting, that was fixed, so dost thou all former Sabbaths, they were but morning stars to usher in thee, the sun, and then to disappear. Other festivals in all their royalty are not arrayed like unto thee. All the graces triumph in thee, all the ordinances conspire to enrich thee; the Father ruleth thee, the Son rose upon thee, the Spirit hath overshadowed thee. Thus is it done to the day which the king of heaven delighteth to honour. Thou hast not only a common blessing with other days by the law of nature, but a special blessing above all other days, from the love of thy maker. Let thousands mark thee for their new birthday; be thou a day, as it was said of that night to the Jews, much to be remembered, much to be observed to the Lord, for bringing many out of worse than Egyptian bondage, Exod. xii. 42; be thou to them a day of light and gladness, of joy and honour, and a good day, Esther viii. 16. On thee light was created, the Holy Ghost descended, life hath been restored, Satan

subdued, sin mortified, souls sanctified, the grave, death, and hell conquered. Oh how do men and women flutter up and down on the week-days, as the dove on the waters, and can find no rest for their souls, till they come to thee their ark, till thou put forth thy hand and take them in! Oh how do they sit under thy shadow with great delight, and find thy fruits sweet to their taste! Oh the mountings of mind, the ravishing happiness of heart, the solace of soul which on thee they enjoy in the blessed Saviour! They are sorry when the days shorten for thy sake, they wish for thee before thou comest, they welcome thee when thou art come, and they enjoy so much of heaven in thee, that thence they love and look, and long the more for their eternal Sabbath. 'Go forth, O thou fairest among women, and be thou fruitful in bringing forth children to thy maker and husband. Be thou the mother of thousands and of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of them that hate them,' Gen. xxiv. 60. Do thou, like Rachel and Leah, build up the house of Israel; do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be thou famous in Bethlehem. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou mighty and gracious day, and in thy majesty ride prosperously; because of meekness, righteousness, and truth, let thy right hand teach thee terrible things; let thine arrows be sharp in the hearts of spiritual enemies, whereby the people may fall under thee. The Lord hath chosen thee, he hath desired thee for his habitation, Ps. cxxxii. Thou art his rest for ever; in thee he will dwell, for he hath desired it. Let him abundantly bless thy provision, and satisfy thy poor with bread; let him clothe thy priests with salvation, and let thy saints shout aloud for joy; let thine enemies be clothed with shame, but upon thy head let the crown flourish. Let nations bow down to thee; let kingdoms fall down before thee. Let all the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdoms of thy Lord and of thy Christ; be thou honoured as long as the sun and moon shall endure, even throughout all generations. Thou art like Joseph, a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a wall, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved thee, and shot at thee, endeavouring to weaken thy morality, and hated thee, but thy bow abode in strength by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel; even by the Lord of Sabbaths who shall help thee, and by the Almighty who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb; the blessings of this day have prevailed above the blessings of all other days; let them be continued and increased on the heads of this holy and honourable day, and on the head of that day

which is separate from its brethren. Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after thy hurt, let them be turned back and put to confusion that desire thy ruin; let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee; let them that love thy sanctification say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, who delighteth in the prosperity of his saints, and therefore hath set apart his Sabbath for their soul-good. Thou, like Jacob, hast got away the blessing from the other days, yea, thy God hath blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed: 'Blessed are they that bless thee, and cursed are they that curse thee.' In a word, the Lord be gracious to thee, and delight in thee, and cause the light of his countenance to shine upon thee; let all thine ordinances be clothed with power, and be effectual for the conversion and salvation of millions of souls; let thy name be great from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. Finally, farewell sweet day, thou cream of time, thou epitome of eternity—thou heaven in a glass, thou first-fruits of a blessed and everlasting harvest: Did I say farewell? A welfare I wish to thee; but oh let me never lose thee, or take my leave of thee, till I come to enjoy thee in a higher form, to see the Sun of righteousness,—who early on thy morning rose and made a day indeed while the natural sun was behind,—face to face, and to know thy maker and master as I am known of him, when I shall be a pillar in the temple of my God, and shall go out no more, but serve him day and night, to whom, for the inestimable dignity and privilege of his own day, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen, amen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in natural actions. And first, in eating and drinking.

As thy duty is to make religion thy business in religious, so also in natural actions. A good scrivener is not only careful how he makes his first and great letters, his flourishes, but also the smallest letters, nay, his very stops and commas. A scribe instructed for the kingdom of heaven, is heedful not only that the weightiest actions of God's immediate worship, but also that the meaner passages of his life, be conformable to God's law. A wise builder will make his kitchen as well as his parlour according to rule. A holy person turns his natural actions into spiritual, and whilst he is serving his body he is serving his God. It is said of a Scotch divine, that he

did eat, drink, and sleep eternal life. Luther tells, that though he did not always pray and meditate, but did sometimes eat, and sometimes drink, and sometimes sleep, yet all should further his account; the latter as truly, though not so abundantly, as the former.[1] And indeed it is our privilege that natural actions may be adopted into the family of religion, and we may worship God as really at our tables as in his temple.

Saints must not, like brute beasts, content themselves with a natural use of the creatures, but use them as chariots to mount them nearer, and cords to bind them closer to God. Piety or holiness to the Lord must be written upon their pots, Zech. xiv. 20. 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,' 1 Cor. x. 31. Philo observeth that the ancient Jews made their feasts after sacrifice in the temple, that the place might mind them of their duty to be pious at them.[2] It is a memorable expression, 'And Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God,' Exod. xviii. 12. In which words we have the greatness of their courtesy, and the graciousness of their carriage. For their courtesy, though Jethro were a stranger, and no Israelite, yet the elders honoured him with their company. And Aaron and all the elders came to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law. But mark the graciousness of their carriage, they came to eat bread with him before God; that is, *In gloriam et honorem Dei*, to the honour and glory of God, saith Calvin. They received their sustenance, as in God's sight, and caused their provision to tend to God's praise.

God takes it ill when we sit down to table and leave him out, Zech. vii. 6, 'When ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?' He sends us in all our food, we live at his cost; and therefore our eating may well be to his credit who is the master of the feast.

The Jews, according to some, had officers at every feast whom they called *præfecti morum;* their work was the inspection of the guests, that none should disorder themselves. I must tell thee, God's eye is upon thee every meal, he takes notice whether thy behaviour is as becometh a saint.

And truly, friend, it behoves thee to use religion as a bridle in thy mouth, to hold thee in when thou art eating or drinking. Thy throat is a slippery place, and sin may easily slip down; it is

[1] Non semper oro, non semper meditor, sed vestio, dormio, edo, bibo; hæc omnia si in fide fiunt, tanquam recte facta, divino judicio approbantur.—*Luth. in Gen.* xxxiii.

[2] Sancti manducant et bibunt in conspectu Dei.—*Origen, in loc.*

no hard matter to sin whilst the thing thou art about is not sinful. How many feed without fear, and thereby fatten themselves to the slaughter! Jude 12. We read of some whose tables are snares, in which they have been caught by Satan, Ps. lxix. 22. Job feared his sons had sinned in their eating and drinking, Job i. 5. There are more guests every meal than thou invitest to thy table. The devil lieth in ambush behind the lawful enjoyment, and will certainly surprise thee before thou art aware, if thou art not watchful. The fatal wound he gave Adam at first was in the throat; by getting him to eat, he brought him and us all to die. If Adam, strengthened with his perfect original purity, was yet caught with this hook, sure I am it concerns thee to beware of the bait; have a care lest the quinsy in thy throat kill thee. Satan is a subtle angler, thou art a poor silly fish; be careful lest he take thee by the teeth and send thee to the fire.

God hath given thee a rule, as for *his* table, when thou art eating of that body which is meat indeed, and drinking of that blood which is drink indeed, so for *thy* table, when thou art feeding on ordinary creatures. He sends in thy provision, and he gives thee direction according to which, and no other, thou mayest use it. A tenant who holds lands of his lord may not use them otherwise than according to the conditions on which his lord let them to him; if he do, the premises are forfeited. Now the great God, who is Lord of the whole earth, giveth his creatures to thee conditionally, that thou make use of them according to his will revealed in his word; if thou usest them otherwise thou makest a forfeiture, and mayest expect every moment that he should take possession.

For thy direction, I shall here set down the conditions upon which God giveth thee thy food, that thou use it sacredly, soberly, and seasonably.

First, Thy duty is to eat and drink sacredly. Piety must be mingled with all thy provision, or else it will be poison. Grace must spice every cup, and be sauce for every dish, or nothing will relish well. Water taken from the fountain quickly corrupts, and becomes unsavoury, but in the fountain it is sweet indeed. Godliness will cause thee to enjoy the creatures in God, the fountain of them, and thereby they will be pleasant to thee.

The daily bread which the Israelites did eat [1] was made of the same corn with the shew-bread which was always before the Lord; to teach us that we should be holy as in God's sight when we are eating our ordinary bread, Exod. xxv. 30. Therefore saints are

[1] B. Babington, *in loc.*

said to eat to the Lord, Rom. xiv. 6. As they eat by him, so they eat to him.

Thy piety at meals consisteth in begging a blessing before thou eatest, in holy expressions and affections when thou art eating, and in thanksgiving after thou hast eaten.

1. In begging a blessing upon thy food. The creatures on thy table are God's creatures; and I must tell thee that thou art more bold than welcome if thou makest use of his goods without asking his leave; he expecteth, though not to be satisfied for his mercies, yet to be acknowledged and sanctified in his mercies. 'Every creature of God is sanctified by the word of God and prayer,' 1 Tim. iv. 5. By the word: all the creatures were polluted to us by the first Adam, but they are purified to us by the second Adam, Ps. viii. The word of promise to Christ, the heir of all things, is our warrant, and speaks our permission. And prayer: the word gives us leave to use them, and prayer brings down a blessing upon them. The word sheweth our right to them through Christ, and prayer acknowledgeth God's right (Gen. ix. 3) to them and us.

God's blessing only is the staff of bread, Exod. xxiii. 25. 'Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God,' Mat. iv. 4. Bread doth not nourish by its own power, but by God's word of promise; he can easily withhold his blessing, and then bread will strengthen no more than chips of boards. 'And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver your bread again by weight; and ye shall eat and not be satisfied,' Lev. xxvi. 26.

Even heathen princes began their solemn feasts with sacrifices. The Israelites would not eat before Samuel came, because he used to bless the sacrifice, 1 Sam. ix. 13. Our blessed Saviour, though he were Lord of all, yet would not feed before he had looked up to heaven and blessed the fish, Mark vi. 41. Paul, though amongst many infidels, yet, before meat, would desire a blessing in presence of them all, Acts xxvii. 35. He is worse than an ox or ass, who will not acknowledge his owner, Isa. i. 5.

Reader, God can give thee sour sauce to thy sweet meat if thou dost banish him thy table; he can make thy meat lie so hard and heavy at thy stomach, either by sickness, Job xxxiii. 20, or sorrow, Ps. cvii. 17, that thou shalt never digest it whilst thou livest. When thou art at thy merriest meeting he can send such a mournful, terrible message, as to Belshazzar carousing in his cups, that

shall make thine ears to tingle, and every joint thou hast to tremble. He can make thy feast to end, either as Adonijah's, in a fright, or as Absalom's sheep-shearing, in a funeral. When thine heart is merry with wine he can summon thee, as Amnon, into the other world. Thy wisest way therefore is to beseech his company, whomsoever thou wantest.

The fruits of trees under the law were the three first years unclean, the fourth year offered to God, and after that free for the owners. All thy comforts are by reason of sin unclean and cursed to thee; if thou wouldst have them clean and blessed, they must be sanctified by the word of God and prayer. The elephant is said to turn up towards heaven the first sprig that he feedeth on. O friend, wilt thou be worse than a beast? For shame, be not so swinish as to feed on the acorns, and never look up to the tree that bears them.

2. In holy expressions and affections when thou art eating. Whilst thy body is filling, thy soul must not be forgotten. Though it be not unlawful at meals to talk of other matters, yet it is pity saints should ever meet to eat earthly bread, and not have some discourse of their eternal heavenly banquet. How often did our Saviour at such a meeting raise the hearts of his company to better meat! Luke v. 31. As their outward man was feeding, he feasted the inward man. When the publican was at much cost to make him a great feast, he entertains him and the rest too with better cheer: 'The whole need not a physician, but the sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' When one of the chief of the pharisees invited him to his table, observe how he teacheth the guests humility, and the master of the feast charity, Luke xiv. 7, 8, 12, 13. His lips dropped honey to sweeten and make all their dishes savoury. One of the fathers writeth, that the primitive Christians were so holy in their talk at their table, that one would have thought they had been at a sermon, not at a supper.[1] Plato gives rules for the writing down the table-talk of men, thereby to make them more serious. Luther's *Colloquia Mensalia*, printed in a large folio, do abundantly prove that he was not idle when he was eating, but that his table was his pulpit, where he read many profitable lectures. There is scarce a meeting of ungodly men to eat but the devil hath his dish among them. The drunkards have a song of David to sugar their liquor, Ps. xxxv. 16; the gluttons have some taunts to fling at saints as sauce to their meat. At Herod's birthday banquet one dish served in was the Baptist's head.

[1] Non tam cœnam cœnant quam disciplinam.—*Tertul. Apologet*, cap. 39.

Should not, friend, God have his dish at thy table? When thou art eating bread, let thy meditation and expression be like his who sat at table with Jesus Christ. 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God,' Luke xiv. 15.

Consider God's bounty and mercy in feeding thee and clothing thee, when many hungry bellies and naked backs are abroad in the world. How many would be glad of thy scraps! When thou hast asked God leave for his creatures, thou mayest taste his love in the creatures. Mayest thou not gather and conclude, if the streams are so refreshing and satisfying, what refreshment and satisfaction is there in the well of living waters? If bread be so savoury to a hungry body; how sweet, how savoury is the bread which came down from heaven to a hungry soul! 'Lord, give me evermore that bread.'

Do as the Jews: 'They did eat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness,' Neh. ix. 21. When thou art feeding thy body, delight thy soul in God's great goodness. Thus, like Mary, when Christ was at meat, thou mayest break thy box of precious ointment, and perfume the whole room with its fragrant smell.

3. In returning thanks when thou hast eaten. Thy duty is to begin thy meals with prayer, and to end them with praise. Thou canst not give God his due price for mercies, but thou mayest give him his due praise. Though thou art never able to buy them of him, yet thou art able to bless him for them. If thou didst dine at thy neighbour's table, thou wouldst think thyself very unmannerly to turn thy back upon him without any acknowledgment of, and thankfulness for, his courtesy. Every meal thou makest is at God's cost; for shame, be so civil as to thank him for his kindness. Saints are compared to doves, Isa. lx. 8, especially for their eyes. 'Thou hast doves' eyes,' Cant. v. Now doves, after every grain they peck, look upward, as it were giving thanks. When God opens his hand, thou mayest well open thy lips. When thou hast eaten and art full, thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, Deut. viii. 10; Joel ii. 26.

Do not, like the fed hawk, forget thy master, or, like them that go to the well, as soon as they have filled their buckets at it, turn their backs upon it. Why shouldst thou forget God, when he remembereth thee? 'When thou shalt have eaten and be full, then beware lest thou forget God,' Deut. vi. 11, 12. Let not thy fulness breed forgetfulness. You think him a surly beggar who, if he receive but a small piece of bread, shall fling away from your doors, and give you no thanks.

The primitive Christians did break bread from house to house,

and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God. Some understand it of sacramental, others of corporal bread, Acts ii. 46, 47. The Lord Jesus was known by his actions or expressions in giving of thanks, Luke xxiv. 31. Nay, the heathen would acknowledge their dunghill deities in those outward mercies: Dan. v. 4, 'They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, and of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.' Wilt not thou do as much for the true God as they for their false gods? Oh let him have all thy praise, who sendeth in all thy provision. God takes it very ill when we do not own and honour him as the author of our meat and drink. Because Israel was so prided with her pronouns possessives—*my* bread and *my* water, *my* wool and *my* flax, *mine* oil and *my* drink—God turns them all into privatives: 'For she did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil, therefore will I return and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and recover my wool and my flax,' Hosea ii. 5, 8, 9. Trumpeters love not to sound in those places where they are not answered with a considerable echo: God delights not to bestow mercies on those persons who will not return him suitable praise. Those that return things borrowed without thanks, must expect, the next time they need, to be denied.

I have read a story in the writings of an eminently pious minister, who was an eye and ear-witness of the truth of it, of a young man who, lying upon his sick-bed, was always calling for meat, but as soon as he saw it was brought to him, at the sight of it he shook and trembled dreadfully in every part of his body, and so continued till his food was carried away; and thus being not able to eat, he pined away, and before his death acknowledged God's justice, in that in his health he had received his meat ordinarily without giving God thanks. The despisers of God's beneficence have been patterns of his vengeance. He hath remembered them in fury who have forgotten his favours.

Some write of the Jews,[1] that in the beginning of their feasts the master of the house took a cup of wine in his hand, and began its consecration after this manner: Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, which createst the fruit of the vine. This they called *Bircath hajain*, the blessing of the cup. Possibly to this David alludeth in Ps. cxvi. 13, 14, 'What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.' After the cup the master of the house took the bread and consecrated it thus: Blessed be thou, O Lord our

[1] Ex P. Fagi. in Deut. viii.

God, the King of the world, which bringeth forth bread out of the earth. This they called *Bircath halechem.* At the end of the feast, the master called to his friends, Let us bless him who hath fed us with his own, and of whose goodness we live; and concluded with a large thanksgiving, wherein he blessed God, first, for their present food; secondly, for their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; thirdly, for the covenant of circumcision; fourthly, for the law given by the ministry of Moses: and then he prayed that God would have mercy on his people Israel; secondly, on his own city, Jerusalem; thirdly, on Sion, the tabernacle of his glory; fourthly, on the kingdom of the house of David his anointed; fifthly, that he would send Elias the prophet; sixthly, that he would make them worthy of the days of the Messiah, and of the life of the world to come. After this prayer the guests, with soft and low voices, said unto themselves, Fear ye the Lord, all ye his holy ones, because there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions want and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall want no good thing.

Alas, alas! how few Gentiles spend half that time in devotion at their tables which the pious among the Jews did! Many go from their food, as the cow from her fodder, taking no notice of the author of it; and like the idolatrous Israelites, 'they sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play,' Exod. xxxii. 6. They sit down to eat and drink, and to rise up to play the beast, to play the atheist.

Remember every creature of God is good if it be received with thanksgiving, 1 Tim. iv. 4; but this thanksgiving must not be only in thy words, but also in thy works: thy unblamable conversation, and thy charitable contribution must speak thy thankfulness. When the master hath fed the servant, he expects that he should go about his business, and do the work appointed him. That strength which thou receivest from God must be improved for God. It is good to bless God with thy lips, but best of all to bless him with thy hands, and in thy life. God will judge of thy thankfulness by thy conversation. Think thus with thyself: This is the God that feedeth me, that satisfieth me with good things: how sweet, how comfortable are his mercies! What sweet refreshment have I had from the creatures, when some better than myself want food! Others have it, but their lives abhor bread, and their souls dainty meat, Job xxxiii. 20. Why should I not love, fear, and trust, and serve this God? I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. Oh be ashamed to live at God's cost, and to do Satan's work. Be not like the young mulets which, when they have sucked their fill,

turn up their heels and kick at their dam. Further, thy duty is to manifest thy thankfulness by supplying the wants of the needy. Job would not eat his morsels alone, but the fatherless had a share with him, Job xxxi. 16, 17. The forementioned author observes, that the heathen were not forgetful, when they were feeding, of their absent friends. God's hand is open to thee: why should thy heart and hands be shut against the hungry bellies and naked backs? Thy goods extend not to God's person, therefore they must to God's poor, Ps. xvi. 2. Have a monitor within thee, to call upon thee when at meals, Remember the poor, remember the poor, remember poor Christ, and hungry Christ, and naked Christ: by this test he will try thee for thine eternal estate; and upon the neglect of this he will sentence thee to the eternal fire, Mat. xxv. 41.

If thou art a rich person, do thou frequently mind this duty. Great housekeepers must be good housekeepers. All must contribute, according to their abilities, to the poor's necessities; but where God gives much, he requires much; he expecteth a harvest suitable to the seed he soweth. It is credibly reported[1] of Mr Sutton, founder of Sutton's Hospital, that he used often to repair into a private garden, where he poured forth his prayers unto God, and amongst other passages was overheard frequently to use this expression, Lord, thou hast given me a liberal and large estate; give me also a heart to make a good use of it. I am confident, a heart to use wealth aright, is a greater mercy than the greatest heap of wealth; I had rather have a little, with a heart to improve it for God, than much, than millions without such a heart. Make thee friends of the unrighteous mammon, that when that fails thee, thou mayest be received into the celestial habitation. When Dionysius,[2] the Syracusian tyrant, saw what heaps of gold and silver his son hoarded up in his closet, he asked him what he meant, to let it lie there, and not to make friends with it, to get the kingdom after his death: O son, saith he, thou hast not a spirit capable of a kingdom. The rust of many a rich man's wealth will eat his heart with pain and torment in the other world, and the apostle calls upon such to weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon them, James v. 1–4. God findeth fault with them that could fare on the finest bread and fattest flesh themselves, and yet forget the afflictions of others, Amos vi. 5.

How many riotous rich men are there, that though they cannot eat and drink all with sobriety, will rather spoil it by gluttony and drunkenness, than let the poor have part with them! like children,

[1] Fuller's Church Hist. of Brit. [2] Justin, lib. xxi.

who will rather crumble away their food, than impart any to their fellows. Oh, how justly was the rich man denied a drop in the other world, when he denied a crum in this world.[1] How many covetous muck-worms, like hogs, are nourished only to be destroyed! they are good for nothing whilst they are alive. The hog is neither good to draw as the ox, nor to bear as the horse, nor to clothe us as the sheep, nor to give milk as the cow, nor to keep the house as the dog, but good only to be killed. Such are these scraping wretches, good for nothing till they come to the knife. Like barren trees, they do but cumber the ground, and serve for no use till they are cut down for the unquenchable fire. And truly, their hearts will never bewail him dead, whose bowels did not bless him alive. His life did not deserve a prayer, nor his death a tear, who laid out that to serve his pride, which God laid in to serve the poor.

Reader, if God have dealt thee a considerable portion of outward good things, consider that thou art but God's factor; he is the merchant. The factor knoweth that the goods transported to him are his master's goods, and he must dispose them according to directions from his master. All thine estate is God's; thou art but his servant, his factor; he gives thee order in his word to dispose it thus and thus, to such poor members of Christ, so much to one, and so much to another, and he will shortly reckon with thee how thou obeyest his directions; and if thou forbearest charity now, thou wilt then be counted and found as real a thief, before the whole world, as ever servant was that put hundreds into his own purse which his master appointed him to pay to other persons. 'Withhold not thy goods from the owners thereof,' Prov. iii. 27, from them to whom it is due, either by the law of justice, or by the law of love, Rom. xiii. 8. And truly charity is the best way to plenty; he gets most that gives most; he that soweth liberally, shall reap liberally.

I have sometimes considered with myself, and wondered why Nabal should be so exceeding churlish to David as not to spare of his superfluities to supply David's necessities, when David had been so exceeding civil to him as to preserve his flocks in safety from the rage of hungry soldiers. But when I marked well the story, I quickly found the cause of Nabal's covetous carriage. He looked upon himself as master of his estate, and not as God's servant to improve it for his profit and praise. 'Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, and give it to men whom I

[1] Willet. Hexap. in Lev.

know not whence they be?' 1 Sam. xxv. 11. Had he but had so much grace as to have called it God's bread, and God's water, he would have disposed it according to God's word, and not have denied a poor persecuted saint; but because he counted it his own proper wealth, therefore it must be disposed according to his own pernicious will.

Reader, look upon thyself, in regard of thine estate, only as a servant in trust, which thou must shortly give an account of, and then 'To do good, and to distribute thou wilt not forget, as knowing that with such sacrifices God is well pleased,' Heb. iii. 16.

Secondly, Thy duty is to eat and drink soberly. 'The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to us, teaching us to live soberly in this present evil world,' Titus ii. 12. This sobriety respecteth both the quantity and the quality of thy diet.

First, Thy duty is to be temperate as to the quantity of thy diet. Reason is content with a little, religion with less. Although no certain proportion of food can be prescribed to men, for those showers which drown the clay valleys, do hardly quench the thirst of the sandy hills; neither the bodies of men, nor their stomachs are all of a size; yet this is a certain rule, for a man to eat or drink so much as to oppress nature, and to unfit himself for prayer, is a degree of intemperance. God gave man food to further, not to hinder him in his general and particular calling; and surely they sin who feed till, like fatted horses, they are unfit for service. Tertullian,[1] speaking of the carriage of the primitive Christians at their meals, tells us, They do not sit down before they have prayed; they eat as much as may satisfy hunger, they drink so much as is sufficient for temperate men, are filled as they that remember they must pray afterwards.

Christians may cheer nature, but they must not clog it. It is a great privilege in the charter granted us by the King of kings, that we should have dominion over the creatures; but it will be a sordid bondage if we suffer them to have dominion over us; instead of being our servants, to become our masters, Ps. viii. 5–7. God, in the very framing of man, intended him for temperance, by giving a little mouth, with a narrow throat, and a lesser belly than other creatures. And in man's charter, which speaks his leave to slay the beasts in God's forest, observe in what tenure it runs: 'Every living thing that moveth shall be meat for you, (there is the gene-

[1] Non prius discumbitur quam oratio ad deum prægustetur; editur quantum esurientes cupiunt; bibitur quantum pudicis est utile, ita saturantur ut qui memimerint etiam per noctem sibi adorandum Deum esse.—*Tertull. Apologet.*

ral concession,) even as the green herb have I given you all things,' (here is the special limitation;) that is, saith an expositor,[1] to use them soberly and moderately, not to gluttony and excess.

It is an abominable shame to a saint to be a slave to the beast in him, his sensitive appetite. 'He that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things.' Beasts seldom surfeit at their food, never sin. Epicurus, who esteemed man's happiness to consist in pleasures, was yet very temperate, as Cicero and others observe. Socrates was wont to say, that evil men live that they may eat and drink, but good men eat and drink that they may live.

Some of the heathen did very much hate excess, either in eating or drinking. The old Gauls were very sparing in their diet, and fined them that outgrew their girdles. Drunkenness, by Solon's law, was punished with death. The Spartans brought their children to loathe drunkenness, by causing them to behold the beastly behaviour of their servants when they were drunk.

But how many nominal Christians, in regard of temperance, come short of heathens! Woe to the drunkards of Ephraim, of England, (God hath a cup of red wine, of pure wrath, and these must drink the dregs thereof,) how doth this iniquity abound! Men drink healths so long till they drink away their health and their heaven too. Some mariners observe that as the waters grow shallower (the sea losing) about the coasts of Holland and Zealand, the waters grow deeper (the sea gaining) about the English coasts. Whether drunkenness ebb in Holland or no, I know not; I am sure it floweth in England. We may complain, as Diogenes Laertius of his countrymen, that when they went to sacrifice to health, they did then most riotously abuse health.

There was a street in Rome called *Sobrius Vicus*, the Sober Street, because there was never an ale-house there. But how few towns have we which may be called sober towns, because there are no drunkards there!

Reader, if thou art one guilty of this sin, for the Lord's sake bethink thyself speedily; dost thou know what thou dost?

Thou wrongest thy body. Vermin abound, as rats and mice, where there is much corn; and diseases abound in bodies given to excess. Too much wood puts out the fire. Meat kills more than the musket; the glutton digs his grave with his teeth, and the drunkard drowns himself in his cup. Stratonicus spake fitly of the Rhodians, they build their houses as if they were immortal, but feed as if they intended to live but a little while.

[1] Willet. Hex. in Gen.

Spare diet is the best cordial of nature. Moderate fasting is the best physic. He that riseth with an appetite, secures his digestion. It was said of Queen Elizabeth,[1] that she ever rose with an appetite, and that Edward the Sixth was wont to call her his sweet sister Temperance, and she lived seventy years. Galen lived one hundred and forty years, and almost all the time without any sickness, and this natural reason is given, that he did never eat his fill.

It wrongs thy estate. The drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty, Prov. xxiii. 21. Their throats are open sepulchres to bury their estates in. Diogenes, when he heard of a drunkard's house to be sold, cried out, I thought he would ere long vomit up his house.

It wrongs thy soul. After rioting and drunkenness, followeth chambering and wantonness, Rom. xiii. 12, and woe and sorrow, and wounds without cause; look not upon the wine, at last it biteth like a serpent; thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things, Prov. xxiii. 20. Excess turns men into swine, and then they are for legions of devils. Intemperance calls off the guard, thy watchfulness, and then the enemies may enter thick and threefold. They that are not sober, cannot be vigilant, 1 Pet. v. 8.

How unfit is a man in his intemperance for any duty. Ambrose observes,[2] As Moses received the tables fasting, so he broke them when the people had been feasting, judging them at that time very unfit to hear the law.

It may be thou art not a drunkard, but yet usest to exceed in eating. Austin avoided the sin of drunkenness, *sed crapula nonnunquam surrepit servo tuo;* he sometimes transgressed in eating: but Lord, saith he, thou hast taught me to use my meat as my medicine.

Let the rational faculty command thy sensitive; consider how contrary to reason it is for a man, like a dolphin, to have his mouth in his maw; and like the ass-fish, to have his heart in his belly;[3] and how contrary to religion it is, to have the kitchen for thy church, a table for thine altar, and the belly for thy God, Luke xxi. 34. 'Take heed lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares.' God

[1] Camb. Brit. Elis.

[2] Tabulas legis quas accepit abstinentia, conteri fecit ebrietas.—*Amb.*, cap. 6, *De Ebri. Aug. Confess.*, lib. x.

[3] Epicharmus calls the ass-fish ἐκτραπελόκεστρον, such a one as varieth from the ordinary course of nature.

alloweth us sometimes a liberal use, as in days of thanksgiving, and at marriages, but never a lustful abuse of his creatures.

Secondly, Thy duty is to be temperate as to the quality of thy diet. Though here no certain quality of food can be set down, God allowing something to the conditions, and much more to the weakly and sickly constitutions of men; yet in general this must be observed, that we make not provision for the flesh, Rom. xiii. 12. We may preserve the flesh, but we must not provide for the flesh. Our enemy is strong enough already, we need not put more weapons into his hands. To live after the flesh is the sign of a sinner, Rom. viii. 13. It is intemperance for a person in health to study and strive how he may gratify his palate. The Spirit of God calls it a sowing to the flesh, Gal. vi. 7. The husbandman plots, contrives, and labours, how he may sow his seed to his best advantage. A fleshmonger will be meditating in the morning before he riseth, with what art his dinner may be so sauced and dressed, that if possible he may excel a beast in carnal delights; he is sowing early, that he may reap liberally. The Christian may take his food, but his food must not take him. It is sinful to be given to our appetites. It is not unlawful to eat dainties, but it is unlawful to set the mind upon them. We may receive them into our stomachs, but not into our hearts. 'When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: they are deceitful meat,' Prov. xxiii. 1–3. In which words we may take notice:—1. Of a supposition, if thou be a man given to appetite; for a man to be given to wine, it notes his extraordinary love to and liking of that liquor. For a man to be given to women, it speaks his excessive care and endeavour to enjoy that brutish and ungodly pleasure. For a man to be given to prayer, Ps. cix. 4, it speaks prayer to be his trade, his employment, the work which he chiefly minds and pursueth. For a man to be given to God, Rom. xii. 1, it notes the soul to be wholly at God's service, to go when God bids him go, to come when God bids him come; so for a man to be given to his appetite, it implieth that all his projects are to please his palate, he is a caterer for the flesh, wholly subject to that sense, altogether at the devotion of his appetite; our appetites are given to us, but we must not be given to our appetites; as Heliogabalus, who was served in at one meal with seven thousand fish, and five thousand fowls. And 2. Here is an imposition, 'Be not desirous of his dainties;' this is a dissuasion from the former irregular affection. We may eat and digest dainties, but we may not

crave and desire dainties. God made man not for fleshly dainties, but for spiritual delights. It is a beastly principle and practice to be at the command of provender, as Apicius the Roman, who wrote ten books of directions how to set forth a feast with all sorts of dainties, and it is said the expenses of his kitchen amounted to two millions of gold. 3. Here is a position, 'For they are deceitful meat.' The desire of dainties is a deadly desire. There is murder under the meat; ordinary, nay manna, extraordinary fare, would not satisfy the sweet-tooth Israelites; thy lusted for quails, but God gave them their desire, they had flesh and death together. Some read the former verse thus, Thou puttest a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. To pamper the body, is the way to destroy soul and body too. Dainties entice to excess. He that erreth in the quality of his food, will quickly exceed in the quantity. They that plot night and day to please the flesh, declare publicly that they have nothing of the Spirit; 'sensual, not having the Spirit,' Jude 19. The flesh and the Spirit are like two buckets in a well, as the one mounts up the other falls down. There is a flat opposition between sowing to the flesh, and sowing to the Spirit, Gal. vi. 7. Nay, the apostle is express in the mention of this kind of intemperate men, 'They serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies,' Rom. xv. All the servants of Christ are sovereigns over the flesh. Ordinances are ineffectual to persons that are sensual. Rain falls off, as it falls on, upon an oiled post. When the waters of the sanctuary flowed, the miry places, that is sensual hearts, could not be healed, Ezek. xlvii. 11. Behemoth lieth in the fens, that is, saith an expositor, the devil in fleshly men, Job xl. 21. Epicures, saith one, whilst he favoureth his fleshly palate, doth neglect the heavenly palace.

There is a distinction of diet to be considered, in regard of bodies, in regard of estates, and also in regard of times; all which piety and prudence must direct the Christian about. But sure I am it is a duty to 'keep under the body,[1] and to bring it into subjection,' 1 Cor. ix. 27. They that acquaint us with the Jewish customs, tell us that their ordinary meals were neither many in a day, nor costly; they were called *Arucoth*, which signifieth such ordinary fare as travellers have in their journey.

The feast which Moses made for his father-in-law and the elders of Israel is called bread, Exod. xviii. 11. So also the entertainment of Christ at the house of one of the chief of the pharisees, Luke xiv. 1, 2; and the daily fare of the disciples, Acts ii. 46, 47.

[1] ὑπωπιάζω, I club it down, beat it black and blue.

Elijah could be content with a raven for his cook. Daniel fed and thrived upon pulse: he looked fairer by it than those that did eat of the king's fare. Brown bread and the gospel are good cheer, said the martyr. John the Baptist could live upon locusts and wild honey. The apostles had some ears of corn for a Sabbath-day's dinner. Though God is pleased out of mercy to afford us better provision, yet our work must be to mind moderation. Oh, how great a curse is it for thee, like Ham, to be a servant of servants, a servant to thy belly, which should be a servant to thee! Thy soul in such a body is but a bright candle in a greasy lanthorn. How much was that speech below a rational creature which Philoxenus uttered, I wish that I had the throat of a crane, that the pleasure of my taste might last the longer! The spider is little else save belly, but she is full of poison.

Besides, it will be a poor account which such men can give for their expenses this way at the great day. God giveth us our wealth for necessaries, conveniences, and moderate delight: not for prodigality and luxury. Heliogabalus made whole meals of the tongues of singing-birds and peacocks, and brains of costly creatures. He used to say, that meat is not savoury whose sauce is not costly. Many men have sold all their lands for their kitchen.

What a pattern doth the heir of all things give us of providence: John vi. 12, 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'

Some indeed are debtors to their bellies; they pinch and pine them with penury, not allowing them what nature requires, whose gold is their god. They are worse than cannibals, eating their own flesh. He that is 'cruel to his flesh, troubleth his own house,' Prov. xi. 7. But the bellies of most are debtors to them, receiving much more than is fit or due, as if they had been born to bow down to and worship their bellies.

If Esau had the title of 'profane' for selling his birthright for a mess of pottage when he was hungry, Heb. xii., how profane then are they that sell their estates, and reason, and health, and souls, and Saviour, and salvation, and all for a moment's brutish pleasure, intemperate eating or drinking.

Our Lord Jesus commandeth his disciples not to be curious about their diet, 'Whatsoever is set before you eat,' Luke ix. If it be wholesome, though it be not toothsome, accept it. The Turks will drink no wine, because Mohammed, their false prophet, forbids it. Reader, be thou temperate, both in regard of the quantity and quality of thy food, because the blessed Jesus, the true prophet of his church, commandeth it.

Thirdly, Thy duty is to eat and drink seasonably. We read of eating in due season, Eccles. x. 17. As there is a season for spiritual actions, when they are most profitable, so there is a season for natural actions, when they are most proper. It is a foul fault not to observe fit hours for our food. Our diet is unseasonable when we begin the day with it. There is a woe to the nation 'whose princes eat in the morning,' Eccles. x. 17; and a woe to the persons that 'rise up early in the morning to follow strong drink,' Isa. v. 11. It is a bad sign when men leap out of their beds into their butteries, and, like children, call for their breakfasts as soon as they are up. The servant must wait on his master till he hath fed. After him is manners. The body must wait on the soul till that hath broke its fast, and had some spiritual refreshment with the blessed God. The body's place is after, not before the soul. The first of the day must ordinarily be given to the Ancient of days. God hopeth to hear from men before either their butlers or cooks hear from them. He expecteth that we should serve him before we serve ourselves, though indeed our serving of him is the only serving of ourselves. Mollerus observeth [1] that David thence pleaded for early protection, because he was early at his petitions. He was early in the morning at his prayer, and therefore he hoped that God would not come late at night with his answer.

Food is unseasonable when one meal treads upon the heels of another, like Job's messengers. The Holy Ghost speaks of some that are early up at it, and continue at it till night, Isa. v. Some make but one meal, as it were, all day. If either meat or drink be offered them, they can no more refuse it, though they were full before, than a dog his bones. Like children and chickens, they are always feeding. Too much oil puts out the lamp.

Men eat and drink unseasonably when they turn the night into day; and when God and nature call them to rest, they ordinarily, like the Roman glutton, spend that time in pampering their bodies. I have read of one that boasted he had not in so many years seen the sun.

The Dutch will sit at a wedding-feast from eight at night to four in the morning, rising in the interim two or three times to ease nature, and then to their dainties and sweetmeats again. They are industrious on the water, and gluttonous on the land. Reader, I hope though they are prodigal, yet grace hath taught thee to be more provident of thy time.

[1] Moller. in Ps. v. 3.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in his apparel and sleep.

Apparel and sleep being of less concernment than some other subjects, I shall speak but little to them; yet because in these things we must walk by the rule of God's word, I shall not wholly omit them. And first, For apparel. The saint's outward, as well as his inward clothing must be sacred. Spiritual priests do all wear, in a sense, holy garments. Sin may cleave to our clothes: the leprosy was not only in the Israelites' houses, but also in their habits, Lev. xiii. Some persons carry the plague up and down in their raiment; their garments are spotted with the flesh, with pride, and wantonness, and prodigality. A Christian may manifest grace in his garments; he may clothe his soul in covering the nakedness of his body; his garments may smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, Ps. xlv. As under the law the clothes of God's people were washed and purified ceremonially, Exod. xix., Num. xi.; so our apparel under the gospel, if we observe God's counsel about it, may be clean and pure spiritually. For thine help herein, reader, I shall speak briefly—

1. To the ends of apparel, which must be minded.
2. To the sins about apparel, which must be avoided.
3. To the virtues in apparel, which must be manifested.

First, To the ends of apparel, which are four:—

1. To cover our nakedness. Innocency at first was man's comely robe, in comparison of which the richest clothes are but nasty rags. Ah, how lovely did he look in that heaven-spun attire! In his primitive splendour, the most gaudy and costly apparel would have been but as a cloud over the face of the sun, or a coarse curtain over a beautiful picture. But sin caused shame, and shame called for clothes to cover it: Gen. iii. 7, 'They knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons.'

2. To defend our bodies from cold. Clothes are a great shelter against the sharpness of the air and weather. Some men's coats are pistol-proof: all men's clothes should be weather-proof. God knew that Adam's fig-leaves were as far from keeping his body warm, as from hiding his soul-wickedness, and therefore made him a coat of skins, Gen. iii. 21. This end of apparel is mentioned,

Prov. xxxi. 21: 'She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet.'

3. To adorn us. Clothes render men more comely. A decent habit is handsome, naked ghosts are frightful. 'Those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness,' 1 Cor. xii. 23.[1]

4. To distinguish sexes and persons. One end of apparel is to difference sexes. The law of nature and the custom of all nations do teach a distinction between the habits of men and women. God himself in Scripture doth expressly command it. 'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's apparel: for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God,' Deut. xxii. 5. Those that have worn the apparel of women, as Caligula, Clodius, and others, have been noted for the worst of men.

Another end of apparel is to distinguish persons. The nobility among the Romans were anciently distinguished from the meaner sort by their ornaments about their shoes. As God hath made a difference among men, some are high, some are low, some are rich, some are poor, so doth he also allow a difference in their apparel; 'Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled are in kings' houses,' Luke vii. 25. Robes and rich attire become judges and justices. They are honourable additions to their office, and cause reverential apprehensions of their persons. The habits of men should be suitable to their conditions and honours, Dan. v. 29; Esther viii. 15; Gen. xlv. 42. As it is sinful for men to go above their abilities, so it is sordid for men to go much below their estates and places; such draw contempt on their persons. Charles the Fifth, emperor of Germany, being to make a royal entrance into Milan,[2] there was great preparation made for his entertainment, the houses and streets were beautified and adorned, the citizens dressed in their richest attire, and a golden canopy prepared to be carried over his head, and a great expectation to see a glorious emperor; but when he came into the city in a plain cloak, and with an old hat on his head, the people would not believe their eyes, but still asked which was he, and laughed at themselves for being so much deceived.

Secondly, The vices about our apparel, which must be avoided. 1. Pride. Pride is a moth which is soon bred in fine garments, but a Christian will consider that the meanest apparel is nature's garment, and the best but sin's garnish. The pedigree of our raiment

[1] *Vide* Diodati, *in loc.*, v. 24. [2] Lips. Exem.

must be remembered, to allay our pride. Our richest clothes are characters of reproach; and as Adam's livery, they are an implicit confession of our sin and shame. The dim-sighted person is not proud of his spectacles, nor he who hath lost one eye, of the plaster which covereth it. When the thief looketh on his fetters, he thinketh of his felony, which was the cause of them. When we behold our habits, we may well be humble, reflecting upon our apostasy, the cause of them. Before the fall Adam and Eve were both naked, and were not ashamed, Gen. ii. 25. A murderer hath as much reason to be proud of his halter as a man of his habit.

Beside, the matter of our clothes is considerable. We are beholden to the beasts for them; what are they but the skin, hair, or wool of beasts? and the finest but the spittle of the silk-worm? Alas! what a pin is this to pierce the bladder of pride, and abate its swelling! One would think if this weed should grow, it must be like the misletoe, out of the rocks; for here is not the least earth to breed or feed it, not the least cause for it.

This pride consisteth inwardly in men's valuing themselves the higher for their habit, which indeed is childish. They discover their want of wit whose spirits rise with their garments, as the boat with the waters. The dogs that kept Vulcan's temple fawned upon a good suit; but if a man came in ragged apparel, they would tear him in pieces. They are brutish who judge either themselves or others to have real worth from the bravery of what they wear. Pride is manifested outwardly by men's readiness to follow new fashions. It is no commendation to Englishmen that they are Frenchmen's apes. *A la mode de France* is most in the gallants' mouths. But they who borrow, saith one, fashions of Egyptians, may meet with their botches and boils. They who affected the Babylonian finery had with it the Babylonian fetters, Ezek. xxiii. 15. 'I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel,' Zeph. i. 8. God speaketh of them, who in their clothes imitated the Egyptians, or the Babylonians. Though they were never so high, (princes' and kings' children,) yet being vain in their habit, they were sure to feel the weight of God's hand. 'I will punish them.' Idolaters are no fit measure for God's people to make their clothes by. The prophet Isaiah draweth up an inventory of the ladies' wardrobe in Jerusalem, and pronounceth both a sharp objurgation and severe commination against them for their twinkling with their eyes, and tinkling with their feet, for their lofty gait and stately garb, Isa. iii. 18–24. We may read there what strange fury God hath for strange

fashions. The daughters of London, saith one, do in pride of countenance and carriage far exceed the daughters of Zion. Alas, how many men are dressed like poppets in a play, and women like Bartholomew babies. Some that are professors, by their antic habits (which are the covers of their shame) become a shame to their profession.[1]

2. Prodigality in our apparel must be avoided. A man must cut his suit according to his cloth. I mean, his apparel must not be above his rank and estate. Some men famish their bellies to make their backs fine; others turn their rents into ruffs, their riches into robes, their lands into laces, and hang, as Seneca[2] saith, two or three lordships in their ears; that when they have their best clothes on, we may say of them, They are in midst of all their wealth.

Even those whose honour may allow richer garments than the vulgar, ought to distinguish between prodigality and what is suitable to their places. Alcisthenes had a costly cloak, sold by Dionysius to the Carthaginians for a hundred and twenty talents. Heliogabalus had rich apparel, yet never wore it twice; his shoes were embellished with diamonds, his seats were strewed with musks and amber, his bed was covered with silver and gold, and beset with pearl. But Augustus Cæsar was much on the other hand, and wore no other garments than what his wife, his sister, or his daughter made him: and being asked the reason, answered, that rich or gay clothing was either the ensign of pride or nurse of luxury.[3] So Alexander Severus, emperor of Rome, did always clothe himself in ordinary apparel, saying, that the empire did consist in virtue, not in bravery.[4]

The ancestor of us all was clad in leather, Gen. iii. 21, and so were the Lord's worthies, 'of whom the world was not worthy,' Heb. xi. 37. Though now every servant forsooth must be clad in silk, and for gallantry outvie their lady. It is recorded, as a piece of high presumption, of Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, that when King John had put his courtiers into a new livery, he put his servants into the same;[5] but in our days presumption and prodigality exceed, for peasants can be more gaudy than their prince. The peacock hath more gay feathers than the eagle, the king of birds.

[1] Oh, what enemy of thine hath taught thee so much vanity? said Mr John Fox to his son, returning from his travel, and attired in a loose outlandish fashion.—*Hist. of Modern Divin.* Willet Hexa. in Levit.: Prodigus est animi vitio retinenda profundens.

[2] Prodigi singulis auribus bina aut terna pendent patrimonia.—*Seneca.*

[3] Sueton. [4] Lips. Exem., p. 184. [5] Speed.

A wise man that dwelleth in a hired house, having no certain time of abode in it, will so far take care of it, that it may be a shelter to him against the weather, and possibly that it be neat and handsome; but he will not be at the cost of curious ornaments or rich pictures, because he knoweth not how soon he may have warning to be gone. Our bodies are the houses of clay in which our souls dwell; we know not how soon death may seal a lease of ejectment, and turn our souls out of doors. It is prudence to fence our bodies so well with garments, that they may be defended against the cold, yea, to be clothed somewhat suitable to our conditions but it is extreme folly to be prodigal in garnishing our earthly tabernacles, when, it may be, this night our souls shall be required of us. Confident I am that tailors' long bills, and their poor neighbours' short coats, who have scarce enough to cover their nakedness, will be little for many rich men's credit at the day of Christ. Reader, if thou art a wealthy man, remember this note whilst thou livest, That one plain coat bestowed on the back of the poor, will become thee better at this day, and yield thee more comfort at the last day, than twenty silver laced ones on thy own back.

There is another thing to be avoided about apparel, and that is curiosity and wasteful expense of time.[1] Excessive outward neatness is often accompanied with excessive inward nastiness. Seneca speaketh of some that spend all their morning, *inter pectinem et speculum*, between the comb and the glass, and are more troubled at a tangle in their hair than at a disorder in the commonwealth. How many in our days spend the whole forenoon in decking their dying bodies, and leave no time to dress their immortal souls! they spend that precious time between the comb and the glass which should be spent between prayer and Scripture.[2] These painted carcases will tell us that if they can but dress themselves by dinner time, it is as much as they desire. Alas, poor souls! what will they do when they come to enter into their eternal estates, when time shall be no more? A dying bed—if their consciences be but awakened—will teach them to value time at a higher rate, and make them know that a commodity of such worth is not to be wasted.

3. I shall speak to the virtues in apparel which must be manifested.

1. Modesty. One end of apparel is to cover our shame and

[1] Vestium curiositas, morum et mentium deformitatis indicium est.—*Bern.*

[2] Cultus magna cura, virtutis magna incuria.—*Cato.*

nakedness; those, therefore, that discover their naked necks and breasts, cross this end, and glory in their shame. Such women proclaim their wantonness. Lascivious habits are unhandsome and unholy: 'That women adorn themselves with modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array,' 1 Tim. ii. 9. Modesty is a woman's special beauty, and a needful virtue in them that are the weaker vessels. As some tempt men to folly by their tongues, so others by their attire. This the very heathen were so sensible of, that Zaleucus, the lawgiver of Locris, enacted, That no woman should be attended with above one maid in the street, except she were drunk; that she should not wear embroidered nor indecent apparel, but when she intended to play the whore.

2. Gravity. Ancient men, those that are in seats of justice, and professors, must not take up every new-fangled fashion. Clothes of light colours on their backs will not be comely. Joseph, a child, might be handsome enough in a parti-coloured coat, but not so a man. When a grave Roman petitioned the emperor for a favour, and was denied, and had afterwards coloured his hair, shaved himself, and in light clothes requested the same courtesy, he was wittily answered by Cæsar, who understood the fraud: I denied your father yesterday, and should I grant it you to-day, he might take it ill.

Christians must be much guided by the credit of religion. 'Whatsoever things are of good report' is both a general and a special rule for a saint to walk by in all such things.

There may be excellent use of that place, Rom xii. 2, 'Be not conformed to this world, *μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε*. Beza translates it, Fashion not yourselves. I love not affected singularity, but I like a Christian gravity, both in countenance, carriage, and attire.

3. There is another thing which a Christian must have a respect to in his apparel, and that is his calling and ability. It is dishonourable both to a man's person and profession, when God hath ranked him among the rich, for him to rank himself among the poor and ragged. Of Lewis the Eleventh, King of France, it is written in his chamber of accounts, 'Two shillings for fustian to new-sleeve his Majesty's old doublet, and three-halfpence for liquor to grease his boots.' Agesilaus, king of Sparta, was slighted by the Persians for his over-plain habit. Covetous men often please themselves that they are not guilty either of pride or prodigality in their apparel, when it may be often said to them, what Socrates told the ragged Grecian, A man may see your pride through the

holes of your coat. As the prodigal erreth in excess, so the niggard erreth in defect.

One of the Jewish Rabbis used to say, that men should apparel themselves below their estates, that they may thrive the sooner; that they should clothe their wives above their estates, that they might live the more peaceably; but their children according to their estates, that they might marry them the better.

Of Sleep.—I shall now speak to sleep, which is the last natural action I have mentioned. In reference to which, three things are principally to be minded—

1. The quantity of it.
2. The season.
3. The end of it.

1. The quantity of it. Thy sleep, reader, must be moderate; but how much, or how little, thy own prudence, or piety together, must judge. No certain time can be prefixed, though some general rules may be propounded. Seven hours sleep is, by physicians, judged sufficient for any ordinary person in health. Youth requires more sleep than age, weak men than strong men. Thy discretion will much help thee, if thou observest thy constitution. Choleric and melancholic bodies need longer sleep than the phlegmatic or sanguine, that the acrimony of choler may be tempered, and the concoction furthered. To the phlegmatic much sleep doth increase their cold and moist humours, and will in time make their bodies altogether sickly; the sanguine are apt to wax gross and corpulent, and unfit for action, all which is helped forward by much sleep. Take heed of immoderate sleep. There is no part of our lives so totally lost as that which is spent in sleep. Sleep cometh like a publican, saith Plutarch, and stealeth away a third part of our time. Therefore the wise heathen have been watchful against this enemy. Aristotle used to sleep with a bullet in his hand, over a brazen pan, that when it fell out of his hand he might be awakened with the noise. Pythagoras used with a thread to tie the hair of his head to a beam over him, that so when he did but nod, he might be awakened thereby. Christians have more cause for bodily, as well as spiritual watchfulness.

David was so far from sleeping at prayer that he would break his sleep for prayer: Ps. cxix. 62, 147, 'I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried; I hoped in thy word.'

Many are the discommodities of immoderate sleep. It wasteth time, a most precious talent, which is committed to us by God, and must be accounted for at the great day. A man asleep can

hardly be said to live. Sleep is a kind of death. It injureth the soul, hindering it of time, robbing it of the body's service, and by blunting its tools, dulling its faculties, that they become unfit for those ends to which they were designed, Prov. xxvi. 13–17.

It wrongeth the body, by weakening the natural heat, and filling the head with vapours, by abating the memory, lessening the understanding, and by making the body heavy, lumpish, and, in a word, a sink of diseases.

It is an enemy to a man's estate. Solomon dissuades from sluggishness, from this argument, 'So shall thy poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man,' Prov. vi. 11. Wealth will not come without working. They are deceived who think to have the pleasure of slothfulness and the plenty of laboriousness; 'The diligent hand maketh rich, but slothfulness will clothe a man with rags,' Prov. x. 4, and xxiii. 21.

2. The season of sleep. In general, the day is, by the command of God and order of nature, the time for watching, and the night for sleeping. The sun approaching draweth forth the spirits from the centre to the circumferent parts, and openeth the pores of the body, both which do provoke to working and waking; but when the sun departeth, the spirits return to the inmost parts of the body, which inviteth to sleep; and besides, the natural moisture and silence of the night are, according to physicians, very conducible to sleep. Wherefore, to sleep in the day and watch in the night, is (unless necessity compelleth it) sinful, and a perverting the course of nature. 'They that sleep, sleep in the night,' 1 Thes. v. 6, 7, which may be understood literally of a natural, as well as mystically of a spiritual sleep. That Roman Emperor that turned the day into night, and the night into day, was abhorred as a monster in nature; such persons are great hinderers of their own health, and thereby of their outward happiness; for sleep draweth the natural heat inward, and the heat of the day draweth it outward, whereby there ariseth a fight with nature, to the ruin of the body. Sleep after dinner in young persons causeth heaviness of the head, dullness of wit, defluxions of humours, lethargies, and other cold diseases of the brain, and also palsies, by relaxing the sinews. Besides, it is not to be forgotten that Ishbosheth lost his life, and David his chastity, by lazying on their beds in the day time.

The most convenient season, I suppose, for sleep—I confess I speak in another's art—is some considerable time after a moderate

supper. When thou hast commended thy soul to God, and put off thy cares with thy clothes, then thou mayest commit thy body to thy bed: 'He giveth his beloved sleep,' Ps. cxxvii. 2. Ahasuerus, who commanded one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, could not command one hour's sleep, Esther i.

3. The ends of sleep must be minded; sleep is given us by God, not for the solution or weakening, but for remission and refreshing of nature, which would be not only wearied, but quite tired out by continual labour. The effects of moderate sleep will speak its ends. Sleep will, if taken seasonably, and not in excess, help digestion, recreate thy mind, repair the spirits, comfort the whole body; it concocteth not only the meats, but also the humours. By the retreating of the heat into the inner parts, the vital faculty is much strengthened, because the heart is abundantly supplied with blood for the breeding of spirits.

The ends of sleep will somewhat direct us about the measure. Sleep may be followed till the concoctions in the stomach and liver are finished, which will be discovered upon our awaking ordinarily by a sensible lightness of the body, especially of the head, and the passage down of the meat from the stomach.

Thus I have despatched natural actions, and discovered how a Christian in eating and drinking, clothing and sleeping, may serve Jesus Christ.

A good wish about natural actions, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

My corrupt heart being prone to turn things lawful into fuel for lust, like the spider to suck poison out of the sweetest flowers, and to make what my God giveth me for a comfort, to prove, through the subtlety of the serpent, as Eve to Adam, a cross and a curse, I wish, in general, that whilst I use my meat, and drink, and sleep, and apparel, I may never abuse them, but that I may so ensure my right to them through Christ, the heir of all things, to taste the love of my God in them, and make such a holy and sanctified improvement of them, that I may have a spiritual title to natural good things; may hold all *in capite*, and the things of this life may be whetstones to quicken my holiness, and loadstones to draw my affections nearer to heaven. In particular, because the snare in eating and drinking is unseen, and so the less suspicious, but the more dangerous, I wish that I may never feed without fear, but eat all

my bread before the Lord; that I may not, as 'the horse and mule, which hath no understanding,' drink of the streams, and never look up to the spring, but may acknowledge my God to be the author of every favour, and be so sensible of the weakness of the creature to strengthen me without the influence of the Creator, that I may constantly look up to heaven for a blessing on that food which springeth out of the earth.

I desire that my heart may so relish the goodness of my God in the bounty of his hand, that whilst I am filling my body, I may by some savoury serious discourse, feed my own and others' souls, that by the blessings of the footstool, as by a ladder, I may mount up to the blessings of the throne. Lord, when thou rememberest me, an unworthy wretch above many others, let me not be so sordidly ungrateful as to forget thy majesty; but as the rivers lead me to the sea, so let common blessings direct me to thyself, the father and fountain of all my mercies. 'Open thou my lips, that my mouth may shew forth thy praise.' Oh let not my thanks be only verbal, but cordial and real; let thy mercy be returned to thyself again in suitable duty, and thy beneficence by answerable obedience. If I receive courtesies from men, I esteem myself bound to requite them to my power. Ah, why should not I then, since I receive millions of mercies from my God, improve all to his praise! I desire that I may not, as the Israelites, bestow that corn and oil on Baal, or make provision for any sin with those favours which my God bestoweth on me; but that all those cords of love may draw me nearer, and bind me closer to himself. I live at thy cost, enable me to live to thy credit. 'Let thy loving-kindness be ever before me, that I may walk in thy truth.'

I wish that I may not only take my food piously, as from God's hand, but also use it temperately, as in God's eye. Excess hath been abhorred by mere heathens. Beasts know when they have drunk enough, and by no beating will be forced to more; and shall I, who, beside my reason, have the help of religion, perish in the water, like the swine possessed with devils? Oh let my sensitive faculty be such a servant to my rational, and both so serviceable to my God, that I may use my food as my physic, receive it sparingly, and for health's sake to become thereby more instrumental for the glory of my Saviour. I do not live to eat, but eat to live; why then should I use my food as if, like the locust, I were all belly, or as some beasts made only to be filled and fatted for the slaughter? I wish that I may observe the seasons for feeding my body, as well as those golden opportunities for my soul; that I may not prefer

the beast before the angel within me, but may usually every morning serve my God before myself, and refresh my inward before my outward man. In a word, I beg that all my pots may be so spiced with piety, and all my meat so sauced with religion, that 'whether I eat, or drink, or whatever I do, I may do all to the glory of my God;' that so when I shall eat and drink no more in this infirm estate, I may 'drink of the rivers of his own pleasures,' and 'eat of that tree of life which groweth in the midst of paradise.'

I wish, in general, that my clothes, as well as my closet, may be perfumed with godliness, that 'the smell of my garments,' as Isaac said of Jacob's raiment, 'may be as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed.' I desire, in particular, that I may so observe the ends for which apparel is appointed, that I may wholly forbear those vices about them which my God forbiddeth, and truly exercise those virtues on them which my God commandeth.

I wish that since garments are given me to cover my nakedness, I may never discover the lust of my spirit in any lewd or loose attire on my flesh, nor ever be proud of those rags, be they never so gaudy or costly, which call aloud to me to be humble, as being the signs of my first and most dreadful sin and shame. I desire that I may not be of the number of them that waste their wealth about that which is at the mercy of the moth, yet that I may not through covetousness offer myself by my clothes to just contempt, but may so walk between the two extremes, as one who wears the livery of religion, that my God may never be dishonoured, nor the gospel disgraced by any spots in my garments. Oh that my soul may so put on the garments of my elder brother, and the graces of the Holy Spirit, that thereby I may be known, as David's daughters, by their raiment of divers colours, to belong to the heavenly court, and thereby be prepared to walk with my God in the white of glory. I wish that I may observe the ends of sleep, how my God alloweth it for the strengthening, not the weakening of nature, that I may not by excess herein turn my friend into an enemy, and whilst I seem to indulge my flesh, wrong both flesh and spirit too. Oh that prudence and piety might both so guide me, that I may ever be watchful against this encroaching adversary, and not, like a dormouse, live as if I were born to sleep! Finally, I wish that I may be so sensible of the worth of those narrow streams of time, because of their tendency to the boundless ocean of eternity, that, like holy Hooper, I may be spare of sleep, sparer of diet, and sparest of time, that I may redeem it as much as may be conveniently from those natural actions which are necessary; and that when eating,

drinking, and clothing, and sleeping, and days, and weeks, and years, and ages shall be no more, I may eat of my Saviour's hidden manna, drink of the new wine in my Father's kingdom, be arrayed with the white linen of the saints, and inherit that rest which remaineth for the people of my God, for ever and for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER XXV.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness, in his recreations and pleasures.

Thy duty is to exercise thyself to godliness in thy recreations; the Christian in his walking, as well as in his working, must be furthering his eternal weal. Our gardens or places of delights, as well as our houses, must be consecrated ground; David's cymbal, viol, and timbrel were all useful in and serviceable to the tabernacle; with them he praised God, Ps. cl. Saints' outward pleasures must be some way or other subservient to their inward purity. It was a witty observation of Bernard[1] on the signification of *Isaac*, which is *laughter* or *joy*, Sacrifice your Isaac, and your Isaac shall live. It is the ram, the rankness and stoutness of your heart which shall die. Reader, sacrifice thy recreations, thy joys, thy delights to God, and they shall all live; it is rankness of them which God desireth should be put to death. That these pleasures are not simply unlawful, is plain; 'Eat thy bread,' saith God, 'with joy, drink thy wine with a merry heart; live joyfully with the wife of thy youth,' Eccles. ix. 7–9. Epicurism is not at all commanded, but moderate delight in creatures is allowed and commended, 'He gives all things richly to enjoy.' To enjoy, not to behold, nor to hoard up; he condemneth those rich cormorants that starve at a full table, and like asses laden with good victuals, feed on thistles, Eccles. vi. 2, 3, ii. 24, and iii. 12. The merciful God is pleased, out of his bounty, not only to allow his creatures what is for necessity, but also what is for delight. Christian, it is more than God requireth of thee to be always pondering and poring on such subjects as make thy heart sad, whereby thou thyself art disadvantaged, banishing that cheerfulness from thee, which is an ornament to Christianity; and others discouraged, supposing that all who walk in heaven's way, must needs be, as thou art, mopish and melancholy. Piety doth regulate, but not extirpate our pleasures. It is a prun-

[1] Bern. de bonis differendis.

ing-knife to cut off the luxuriancy of them, not a weeding-hook, to pluck them up by the roots. If thy body be, as one of the fathers calls it, *jumentum animæ*, the soul's beast, then it must be allowed some rest and refreshment, or else it will carry thee but heavily along in thy journey.

It is reported of a primitive Christian, that as he was on a time playing with a bird, two or three youths going by saw him, and one of them spake to the other, See how this old man plays like a child with a bird! Which the good old man overhearing, called him to him and asked him, what he did with the bow in his hand, and how he used it. Whereupon the young man bent his bow, shewed him what he did with it, and unbent it again. Why do you unbend it? saith the old man. Because, saith the youth, if my bow should always stand ready bent, it would prove a slug and be unserviceable. Such is the condition of man, saith the old Christian; if his mind were always bent and intent about the best things, the wings of devotion would soon flag, and the arrows of contemplation fly but slowly towards heaven.

The most, I know, need a curb in this particular of recreation rather than a whip, yet some there are that whilst they strive to 'keep under their bodies,' ride over them, and make them much more unserviceable than they would be. Whilst they go about to punish their bodies for their former wantonness and excess, in the end they punish God and their souls too. The temper of the soul, philosophers tell us, followeth the temperament of the body;[1] a dull knife cannot cut well. A pen worn out will not make good letters; he that would do his work well, must see that his tools be right for his turn, otherwise he will but bungle at the best.

I am confident that it is thy duty to keep thy body in the best plight and health, vigour, and liveliness that thou canst, for thy soul's sake. I must confess I intend in this head those recreations which exercise the body or mind, so as to fit them to follow the better our general or particular callings.

A holy man could indeed wish that his body needed no such diversion, but when he findeth that after long sitting, or much labour, his body is clogged and tired, he is forced to give way to reason. For vain and sinful recreations, reader, I must in the name of God forbid them; I am not about to teach thee how to honour God by doing Satan's work. They that study the devil's books, will hardly learn Christ's lesson. There be some that 'take pleasure in unrighteousness,' Rom. i. 32. Holy things are too good to be sported

[1] Temperies animi sequitur temperamentum corporis.

with, and vicious things are too bad; things of an indifferent nature are fit to be the subjects of our recreations. Those sports which are of evil report amongst saints, or which thou hast experienced to be bellows to blow up the fire of thy passion, or fuel to thy covetousness, must be avoided. Avoid all occasions and appearances of evil; sports sinful in the act, like the play between Abner's and Joab's soldiers, will be bitterness in the end.

When Thespis,[1] a poet at Athens, made a play which delighted all the citizens, grave Solon himself went to see it; but when the play was ended, wherein Thespis acted a part, Solon called him to him, and asked him, if he were not ashamed to lie so openly in the face of the whole city? Thespis answered him, that it was no matter, so long as it was but in sport. But Solon, beating his staff on the ground, replied, If we allow lying in sport, we shall shortly find it in earnest in our bargains and dealings. Certainly heathens will another day condemn our mongrel Christians; the sober sort of them seemed to hate and abhor that harlot vice, though presenting herself upon a stage with her painted face, and most gaudy dress, which many among us love and like, and even doat upon her; but such must know that sins in jest will bring at last sufferings in earnest. Men laugh, and jest, and mock at sin; 'It is a sport to a fool to do mischief,' Prov. x. 23, but surely they will find hell a serious thing, for 'God will not be mocked.' They pretend now that they have time to spare, and if they should not spend it at a playhouse—I had almost said a whorehouse—they should spend it worse. Alas, do they not know that God gave them time to provide in for their eternal felicity, and not to squander it away in such foolish vanities? If time be a drug that hangs on their hands to their trouble, God may take it off before they are willing or aware, and send them to their everlasting home. Those were worthily condemned that 'took the timbrel and harp, and rejoiced at the sound of the organ;' and therefore said unto God, 'Depart from us,' Job xxi. 14.

But, reader, thou mayest be merry and not mad, enjoy thy pleasures without such poison; thou mayest have thy recreation, and never be beholden either to sin or Satan for them; God alloweth thee choice enough of trees in his garden, though thou dost wholly forbear the forbidden fruit; nay, thou mayest, like a skilful mariner, make use of this side-wind of recreation, to help thee towards the haven of rest.

The author of the *Belgic Commonwealth* tells us, that printing was first invented by one Lawrence Jans, when he walked abroad

[1] Plut. in Vit. Sol.

for his recreation. It is said of Socrates, that he profited his companions by his recreations, no less than if he had been reading lectures. I have read of one,[1] that by hearing music, tuned his heart to think of, and admire the melody and music in heaven. Truly I see no reason but a Christian may cause his recreation to do that, which naturalists deny to odours, even both to refresh and nourish him.[2] Only be sure thy recreation be innocent, neither dishonourable to God, nor disadvantageous to thy neighbour. Think of that rule, 'All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.' Some recreations are lawful, which are not expedient, either in regard of thy age, calling, or the company thou art with. He that will do all he may, will quickly be brought to do what he ought not. It is much easier and safer for the fowl to pass by the snare when she is *out*, than to go out when she is once *in*.

We say, It is not evil to marry, but it is good to be wary: so say I, It is not bad to use recreations, but it is good to be watchful, that we do not abuse them; which that thou mayest not do, I desire thee to enclose this common, which many wander in to their woe, with these three cautions:

First, Mind moderation at them; remember thy recreation is not to be thy occupation. God made leviathan to sport in the waters, but God made not man to play upon the land. Our time here is our pilgrimage, and therefore not to be spent in pleasures. The candle of our lives is set up, not to play, but to work by. *Spinster* is a title given to our greatest women in our law language. A man that builds a house, will not make it very full of windows, for then it would be weak; neither will he make it without any, for then it would be dark. Recreations to our natural, are like windows to our artificial houses; some are convenient, many weaken the building, and strengthen the thief, who hath the more advantage thereby to steal.

Fish that leap into the air for their recreation, return quickly to their own element again. Beasts that play up and down in the fields, in a short time return to their food. Recreation is like some pleasant house which we may call at, as we pass on toward our heavenly country, but must not stay, much less dwell there. Sir Francis Bacon said of parliaments, in reference to the English body politic, that they are good purging physic, (to be made use of now and then,) but bad diet-drink, (to be taken constantly.) The same may be said of recreations; if used in measure, they are helpful; if immoderately, they are hurtful. They are good sauce, but bad

[1] Mr Esty.

[2] Odores non nutriunt.

meat. Plato reproved a young man for playing at dice;[1] the young man answered him, For how small a matter do you reprove me! Ay! but, saith Plato, the custom is no small matter.

Those that put their hands to their mouths, when they drank water, were elected by God to fight his battles; those that bowed down to the ground upon their knees, were rejected, Judges vii. 5-7. Those that swoop their handful of pleasant waters, are fitter for God's work, than they that swill their bellyful. God taxeth them sharply, who make carnal delights the end of their lives: 'Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton.' God alloweth us pleasures in our lives, but God doth not allow us to live in pleasures, James v. 5. When our lives are nothing else but a diversion from one pleasure to another, we may fear our deaths will be the beginning of our pains. Nimrod, Ishmael, Esau, all vicious persons, are noted to be given up to such pastimes.

The people of Tombutum in Africa are said to spend their whole time in singing and dancing. Some persons, especially gentlemen, spend their whole time in hawking, or hunting, or gaming; of whom I may speak, as Pliny to his son,[2] when he saw him spend his time in talking, and walking, and neglect his studies; they might put those hours to better use; or as the Holy Ghost saith of the voluptuous widow, They are 'dead while they live,' 1 Tim. v. 6.

Great men think, with Galba,[3] that no man shall be called to account for his idleness; but they will one day hear of 'wicked and slothful servants,' and find a truth in the German proverb, that gentlemen are venison in heaven; they seldom come thither.

Reader, take heed of the hook that is hid under this bait of pleasures; thou mayest nibble at it safely, but if once thou goest with open mouth to swallow it down, thou art caught, and in danger to be undone. The fly that cometh to a glass of sweet syrup, and only tasteth it, may get away securely; but if once he bathe his body and wallow in it, he is limed and loseth his life. Some drugs are given to procure sleep, which, if taken moderately, may give the patient rest, and do him good; but if in any great quantity, may cause him to sleep his long sleep, and send him to the place 'where the weary are at rest.' Weigh thy pleasures warily in the balance of the sanctuary, lest thou shouldst eat of that luscious diet, more than thou canst possibly digest. In a word, follow the advice of reverend Bede,[4] For pleasure, saith he, we must deal with it as

[1] Diogen. Laert.
[2] Lib. iii. cap. 5.
[3] Nemo rationem otii reddere cogetur.—*Suet. in Gal.*
[4] In vita.

we do with honey, only touch it with the tip of the finger, not with the whole hand, for fear of surfeit. Though a little honey be sweet and comfortable, yet much causeth gripings, and breedeth choler. Fragrant flowers, if used moderately, refresh the brain; but if too much, cause the headache. 'Light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun;' yet a man by staring too long, too much, may dazzle, nay, blind his eyes. Do as Jonathan did, 'He put forth the end of the rod which was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes were enlightened,' 1 Sam. xiv. 27. His eyes were enlightened; a little will satisfy, much will surfeit. Though swine lie night and day in such mud, do thou as the sheep, which sometimes fall into the mire, but hasten out of it to the pleasant meadows. Though the necessity of thy body calleth thee to thy recreations for a season, yet let the necessities of thy soul and family call thee off from them in due time. Let thy recreations be like a porter, whom thou mayest use for half an hour or an hour, as thy occasions are, and dismiss; and not like a household servant, to dwell with thee constant. The Lacedemonians were so sparing, that they are said to be even covetous of their time.

Secondly, Look that thine end in them be right. The end here will speak much to the specification of the act; thy recreation must be as sauce to thy meat; we eat sauce to sharpen our appetites to our food, and to make us relish it the better; so we must use recreations to whet our stomach to our callings, and to make them the more savoury to us. As music to the Jews did stir up their minds, and prepare their hearts for holy performances; so lawful recreations may be used by us Gentiles, to fit us for the service of God in our general and particular vocations. The saint, by the comforts of his life, may delight more in God, the life of all his comforts; he may follow these streams so long, till he comes to the fountain of living waters. He may conclude with himself, if recreations by the creature be so sweet, how sweet is communion with the Creator!

The musician doth not leave his strings constantly wound up, but sometimes lets them down, and his end is, that when he goeth again to use his viol, it may make the better music. The wise husbandman will not always cross-crop his ground, but lets it sometimes lie fallow; and his end is, that sowing upon a tilt, he may have the greater crop. So the Christian may allow his mind moderate release, he may afford the ground of his outward man some rest; but his end must be, that when it comes again to be

sowed, to be employed, it may be the more serviceable to God and his soul; and truly so by going back a little, he may have this advantage to leap the farther.

Oh, how sordid a thing is it for men to use sports merely to pass away their time! hence they foolishly call them *pastimes*. Reader, art thou in haste to have some part of the thread of thy life cut off, as if it were too long? Wilt thou never consider that time is a silver stream, running along into the ocean of eternity, and that eternity dependeth on the spending of this moment of time? Dost thou not believe that thy jovial companions, now in hell, would give a whole world, if they had it, for one hour; and that when thou thyself comest to die, and to look into the other world, thou wilt say, with the Roman general Sertorius, in answer to his soldiers, who told him it was dishonourable to the Romans to pay tribute to the barbarous people inhabiting the Pyrenean mountain,[1] time is a precious commodity, to be taken up at any rate. Good God, how much wilt thou think a week, a day, nay, an hour worth!

For thy soul's sake weigh thy time as it stands in relation to thine everlasting condition, and then I am confident thou wilt aim at another end in thy recreations. Though children go to school, and work in hope of play, yet men play to fit themselves for work. Though wicked men have such sordid sinful ends in their delights, do thou mind more noble and worthy designs: therefore oil the wheels, that thou mayest move the more cheerfully, and run the more swiftly 'in the way of God's commandments.'

Thirdly, Have an eye to the season of them. Scholars have their play-hours, yet if they be found playing when they should be at their books, they must expect to be beaten. The master that doth not grudge his servant time to visit his friends, and rejoice with his familiars; yet if he should do it when his work lieth upon the spoil, he could not but take it very ill. God alloweth us liberty for moderate delights, but it is only when our general and particular callings will give us leave. Cardinal Angelot is chronicled for a sordid person for stealing away the oats which his man had given his mare: how sordid are those parents who steal their children's food to pursue their own pleasures! He that neglecteth his particular calling to follow his sports, is like him that starveth his son to feed his swine; and he that omits his prayers and religious duties to mind his pleasures, is like him that is condemned to be hanged, and hath only three days allowed him to procure his pardon in, yet he spends all that time in hawking or hunting.

[1] Plut.

Recreations are like some fruits, not always in season; though at some times they are very wholesome, yet at other times they are very hurtful. The wise man tells us, 'There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance,' Eccles. iii. 2, 5. There is a time to weep: sorrow is not always seasonable. Delilah disparaged her discretion by weeping on the day of her wedding. There is a time to laugh: delights are sometimes out of fashion. He forfeits his credit that sports at a funeral: music never suited with mourning.

In general, recreations are then unseasonable when God and men's families are neglected that they may be minded; when, to give them water, we are forced to make the mill of our general and particular callings to stand still. Oh what a fool is that voluptuous youngster, who having no more horses than what is sufficient for his ploughing, will yet take one to hunt upon, and thereby cause the rest to be idle, and his business to be undone! But how mad is that person who, Esau-like, is hunting, and thereby misseth the blessing!

In particular, our recreations are unseasonable on a Lord's-day, and in times of public calamities.

1. Recreations are unseasonable on a Lord's-day; carnal pleasures must then vanish, and spiritual pleasures must take place. Our joy must be pure and heavenly on that day. It is a holy day, and therefore calls for holy delights. God inviteth the saint on that day to his own table, provideth for him costly, curious food, and expecteth that he should come, and not bring along with him the world's coarse fare. Observe the precept in the evangelical prophet: 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shall honour him, not finding thine own pleasures, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord,' Isa. lviii. 13, 14. Take notice, *from doing thy pleasure on my holy day*, our pleasures are such as flow from creatures. Now, the wine which makes glad the heart of a saint on a Sabbath must be drawn from another pipe. That which runs from the world is too flat, low, and full of dregs, to be served in to the great King.

When Aristotle was asked what he thought of music, he answered, *Jovem nec canere, nec citharam pulsare*, That Jupiter cared not either for singing or fiddling; he was for higher and more refined exercises. The infinite God doth always overlook our puddle-water, more especially on his own day, when he alloweth us to drink of his own richest wines: 'They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river

of thy pleasure,' Ps. xxxvi. 8. Mark, 1, The excellency of the provision, *fatness of thy house*, the *river of thy pleasures*. The fattest is esteemed the fairest, and the most excellent food; therefore the saint was enjoined to offer the fat in sacrifice under the law. As God expects the best from us, so he gives the best to us: this made David, when he had feasted so curiously, to sing so cheerfully. Fatness here is the top, the cream of all spiritual delicacies. 'My soul is filled as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips,' Ps. lxiii. 5. But though God keeps so noble a house to satisfy his people's hunger, what special care doth he take to quench their thirst! 'Thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures.' Oh, he drinks to them, and they pledge him in his own cup! Hath the child then any cause, when his Father keeps so rare and costly a table, to leave such dainties, and go a-begging up and down the country for scraps and fragments? Oh, how much do these disgrace their Parent's provision and their own discretion! But mark, reader, 2, The plenty as well as the excellency of this provision. Here is fatness in the abstract; a 'river of pleasure,' and so much as that they who enjoy it shall be 'satisfied,' and 'abundantly satisfied.' A river is overflowing and ever flowing; it communicates its water, and yet is never empty. It is fed with springs and fountains, and therefore it is no wonder if it always be full. They that are at such a well need not complain of want—but here is not only rivers and fatness, for some have much, and yet cannot feed—but of God's people it is said, 'they shall be abundantly satisfied:' in the original it is *inebriated*, they shall have not only a sufficiency, but a redundancy of spiritual delights; the vessels of their souls shall be filled to the brim out of that river 'whose streams make glad the city of God.' Surely, then, they that may have bread in such abundance, enough and to spare, in their Father's house, made of the kidneys of the wheat, of the finest flour, need not hanker after the world's homely fare. Our heavenly Father doth not keep so starveling a house, that the world's scraps should go down with us.

Besides, how abominable is it to disturb God's rest with our sports! Some work hard on the week-day, and play on the Lord's-day. No melody so delightful to them as temple music, no draughts so sweet as in temple vessels, Amos vi. 5; Dan. v. 2. No time so fit for their foolish triumphs as God's time. The heathen Philistines, when they offered a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, call for Samson to make them sport. These uncircumcised persons mingle their sacrifices to the true and living God with sports and

carnal, nay, sinful pleasures. Week-days, like ordinary virgins, are excused, and the Lord's-day, the queen of days, must be deflowered.

Reader, if thou art guilty of this sin, know that to steal time from thy family or master on a week-day is theft; but to steal time from thy Maker and Redeemer on this day is sacrilege. Hast thou no metal to disfigure and embezzle but that which hath the King's stamp on it? Hast thou no time to sleep in thy cabin or play on the deck but just when the wind blows fair for the vessel of thy soul to launch forward towards heaven? I must tell thee that God calls thee on this day to be wholly taken up in working out thy salvation, and not at all in minding thy recreations. It were better, as Austin saith—though that were very bad—to plough all day than to play all day.[1] But as Cyrus dealt with the Lydians, when he had conquered them in the battle, he allowed them liberty for all sports and pastimes, and thereby subdued them in such a manner that they became his servants for ever;[2] so Satan dealeth with the children of men: when they are his already in part, by Sabbath-day pastimes he makes them his sure and settled servants altogether, and so they become his for ever.

2. Secondly, Recreations are unseasonable in times of public calamities. The son is very undutiful who laughs under the rod, and that daughter very unnatural who is sporting when her mother is dying: 'A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished;' it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter; 'Should we then make mirth?' Ezek. xxi. 9, 10. Should we then make mirth? as if he had said, Such seasons call for sighing, not for singing: for mourning, not for mirth.

The Jews tell us, the very beasts abstained from copulation in time of the deluge. Naturalists tell us of the bees, that when one is sick, the rest in the hive are all sad.[3] Experience tells us, that the very birds, who in summer sing division prettily, with divers tunes and variation of their pleasant voices, in winter forbear their notes, and seem to sympathise with the season; and shall not we humble our hearts when God's hand is lifted up? How much is he displeased when his chastenings are despised! Amos vi. 5–7. 'In that day did the Lord God call to weeping and mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely

[1] Melius toto die ararem, quam toto die saltarem.—*Aug. in tit. Ps.* xcii.

[2] Justin, lib. i.

[3] Plin. lib. xi. cap. 17.

this iniquity shall not be purged away till ye die, saith the Lord of hosts,' Isa. xxii. 12, 13. *In that day*: When the Persians invaded God's people, then they minded their pleasures; the unseasonableness of their laughter provoked God to anger. Solace in the day of Jacob's troubles, is like winter fruits, harsh and sour, Jer. ix. 1. The church may speak to such as they did to the philosopher, who in a great tempest at sea was asking many trifling questions,' Are we perishing, and dost thou trifle?

Our duty is to sympathise with our fellow-members in their sufferings: 'Weep with them that weep,' Rom. xii. 15. Now if we give ourselves then to take our ease, we shall hardly feel our brethren's cords through our soft beds.

Alexander, though in extreme thirst (when his army was ready to famish for want of water) refused the cup of water presented to him,[2] with this excuse, I cannot drink alone, and here is not enough for every one of my soldiers to wet their lips. Surely Christianity layeth a stronger obligation upon us, when the church is like her husband, carrying her cross, to cut herself short in regard of worldly comforts.

Reader, is thy mother sick, and art not thou sorrowful? Is thy God, thy Father, pierced and dishonoured by sin, and canst thou take thy pleasure? Are thy brethren and sisters in great affliction, and hast thou no fellow-feeling affections? When David asked Uriah why he went not to his house after his journey, he answered him, 'The ark, and Israel, and Judah abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord are in the open field; shall I then go into mine house, and eat and drink, and lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing,' 2 Sam. xi. 10, 11. Truly, if thy flesh should tempt thee to carnal mirth in a day of Zion's tribulations, do thou repel it as he did. The beautiful spouse of Jesus Christ, the blessed members of his body, are in great affliction; they water their couches with tears, and they mingle their drink with weeping; and shall I mind my play and sports and earthly delights? Through the Lord's help I will not do it. No, by the rivers of Babylon let me sit down and weep when I remember Zion. Alas! how foolish is that man who can laugh and jest, and be merry in his private cabin, as if he were safe and secure, when the ship of the church in which he saileth is in a boisterous and dangerous storm.

Thus I have despatched the third particular, wherein a Christian must exercise himself to godliness, namely, recreations.

[1] Aul. Gell. [2] Qu. Curt.

A good wish about recreations.

Recreations being the intermission of my labour, and spending of some time in delightful exercise, for the refreshing of my body and mind, which, by working much, are apt to tire and grow weary, I wish, in general, that I may never abuse this favour which my Master affordeth me (as some drunken servants) to make me unfit for his work, but may be so conscientious in observing those cautions about it, which his law prescribeth, that my vigour and strength being thereby repaired, I may after it follow his business with the more alacrity and ability. In particular, I wish that my teeth may never water after forbidden fruit, that I may not be so prodigal as to lay my precious inestimable soul at stake by any sinful pleasure. My God hath told me how I may be merry and not have the devil for my playfellow. Oh let me never defile my spirit whilst I am delighting the flesh, but let my sport, for the kind of it, be like Cæsar's wife, without the least suspicion of fault. I desire that my carriage at it may be wholly free from passion and covetousness; and to this end, that I may never venture what I esteem at any value. My mind hereby would be disturbed, not refreshed, and so the end of recreation altogether frustrated. I wish that such delights may be used as my medicine—only now and then, when nature requireth them—not as my meat, constantly every day. Let my God of all consolation lie, as a wife, in the bed of my heart, in my bosom, be the delight of my eyes, whom I would by no means have out of my sight; but let those low pleasures, as my servants, always remain in an outward room, and go or come as occasion shall require and religion direct. I wish that I may never mind recreations for those foolish sinful ends of passing away the time or pleasing the flesh; but, as Elijah called for a minstrel, that his mind being thereby calmed and cheered, he might be the more fitted to prophesy, so I may refresh my body for this very end, that it may be the more serviceable to my soul, and both of them thereby to my dearest Saviour. I wish that my earthly delights may not be unsavoury, because, as fish at some times of the year, they are unseasonable; that when my general or particular occupation require my presence, I may not be absent at recreations. Why should I, like the rich fool, be talking of taking my bodily ease, when my soul is in danger of endless pain, or, like profane Esau, be following my carnal pleasures, to the loss of my spiritual privilege? Finally, I desire that I may not (as Nero, when Rome was on fire) be singing, when the people of God are sighing, but moderate or deny my mirth when the members of Christ are mourning. Oh let me

'prefer Jerusalem before my chief joy.' In a word, I wish that I may not disparage my God, by meddling with drossy comforts, when he calleth me to golden cordials; that I may not disobey his law by minding my pleasure on his holy day, but may delight myself, on that day of the Lord, in the Lord of that day. Oh let me gather from recreations, with the holy father: If ordinary glass be at such a price, how precious is a true diamond! If the world's trash drain such joy, what joy will flow from the true treasure!

Lord, let my chiefest and constant recreations be to walk with my beloved in the garden of thy word, to refresh my spiritual scent and sight with the fair and fragrant flowers of thy promises and precepts, to do the work which thou hast given me to do, and to enjoy fellowship with thyself in ordinances, till I come to that place where bodies are above such dreggy delights, and souls above all mediate communion, and thou thyself art all in all. Amen.

CHAPTER XXVI.

How to exercise ourselves to godliness in our particular callings.

As religion must be our business in our spiritual and natural, so also in our civil actions and particular callings. The heavenly bodies have an influence, not only on men and women, but also on trees and plants. The holiness of a saint must be operative, not only in his more noble exercises, the ordinances of God, but likewise in his earthly and inferior employments. Thy duty is, reader, to mind thy general in thy particular calling, and to drive a trade in heaven, whilst thou art following thy trade on earth. When thou art called to the Lord, thou art not called from thy labour; nay, as thou art a servant of Christ, thou art bound to be serviceable to thy country, in some mental or manual calling; but thy diligence therein must proceed from conscience, not from covetousness—from subjection to God's word, not from affection to thy wealth.

As thy particular calling is the zodiac through which thou daily passest, so godliness must be the ecliptic line to go through the midst of it. Godliness must be the key to open the shop; godliness must be the whip to drive the cart; godliness must be the cock to call thee up to thy work; godliness must be the clock to call thee off from thy work; godliness must be the principle, the

rule, and the end of thy work. *Holiness to the Lord* was written upon the bridles of the horses, Zech. xiv. 20.

Truly, reader, thy care had need to be great about thy calling, lest it cause thy ruin. More die by meat than by poison. By lawful things many perish. Worldly things will court thee that they may kill thee. They that dig deep into the bowels of the earth have not seldom been stifled with the damps that arise thence. These things are so subject to defile and destroy us, that God made a law that they should not be used before they were purified, Num. xxxi. 22, 23. Some were destroyed by those houses which were made to defend them. Like Saul, they fall on those swords which should have been for their safety. Particular callings were designed for our good; but how often do they prove our grief! Are there not those who, like Korah and his company, are swallowed up alive of earth, and consumed? Pliny observes, that in Phoselis the hill Chimæra burneth night and day.[1] The fire, saith he, is kept burning by water, but quenched by earth. The earth of particular vocations hath sometime put out that fire of devotion, which the water of affliction could not do.

It behoves thee to take heed how thou handlest these thorns, if thou wouldst not prick thy fingers and pierce thy conscience. I shall for that end give thee some directions out of the word.

First, Be diligent in thy calling. It is observable that the apostle adviseth the Romans, 'Be not slothful in business, serving the Lord,' Rom. xii. 11. All the children of Adam are enjoined to mind their particular callings, by virtue of that command or threatening to their father, 'In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread,' Gen. iii. As in the body politic, so in the body natural, there must be order, to which three things are requisite. 1. That every part be in its proper place, each star in its own orb. 2. That the parts have each to other a due proportion. 3. That every member do its duty, and be some way or other helpful to the body. Idle persons are like wens in the face, which receive of the body's nourishment, but serve only to disfigure it. Those that are no workers, in God's account, are disorderly walkers, 1 Thes. v. 14. Augustus built an *Apragopolis*, a city void of business; but God made not the world to be a nursery of idleness. The Ethiopians, as the historian observeth, would acquaint their youth that they were born to labour, by accustoming them betimes to fling great stones. Amongst the Turks, every man must follow some trade, the grand Signor himself not excepted. The *censores*

[1] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 106.

morum among the Romans were to observe who were diligent, who were negligent in their vocations, and accordingly to commend or condemn them. The Grecians, according to Solon's law, were great discouragers of them that, like vermin, lived only to eat what others earn. The Council of the Areopagites inquired how every man lived, and punished such as they found idle. The devils themselves are diligent about their deeds of darkness. Creatures void of life are serviceable in their places and stations: angels, nay, God himself is always working. An idle person cannot find either in heaven or hell a pattern. Our lives are therefore called, 'the lives of our hands,' because they are to be maintained by God's blessing on our labours.

The patriarchs, those persons of renown, were eminent for taking pains, they did not eat the bread of idleness. How frequently and how ardently doth the word call upon us to be working in our particular callings! What precepts doth the Scripture give for it, 'That you do your own business, and work with your own hands, as we commanded you,' 1 Thes. iv. 11. What promises doth God make to it: 'He that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread,' Prov. xii. 11, 24. 'The soul of the diligent shall be made fat,' Prov. xiii. 4. That arm which is most used groweth stronger and bigger than the other: the more the vine spreadeth itself against the wall, the more it receiveth of the sun's warmth and influence.

Pliny[1] reporteth of one Oressianus, who from a little piece of ground got much wealth, and more than his neighbours could from a greater quantity, whereupon he was accused of witchcraft; but to defend himself he brought forth his servants and instruments of labour on the day of trial, and said, *Veneficia mea, Quirites, hæc sunt:* These, O Romans, are all my witchcrafts; I say not to my servants, Go and do this; but, Come let us do this and that, and so the work goeth on. The keys that men keep in their pockets and use every day wax brighter and brighter; but if they be laid aside, and hung by the walls, they soon grow rusty. Students who are given to a sedentary life often waste in their strength, when others whose time is spent in bodily labour increase in strength; 'In all labour,' saith the wise man, 'there is profit.'

There is a threefold care mentioned in the word of God. There is a care of the head, a care of the hand, and a care of the heart. The care of the head is the care of providence, this is commendable, Prov. xxxi. 16. The care of the hand is the care of diligence, this is profitable, Prov. xxi. 5. The care of the heart is the care

[1] Lib. xviii. cap. 6.

of diffidence, this is abominable, Phil. iv. 6. Upon which words Zanchy observeth well: God doth not say, μηδὲν πράττετε, but μηδὲν μεριμνᾶτε, not *do nothing*, but *be careful for nothing*. The two first are commanded, but the last is forbidden. Reader, thou mayest as well expect riches to rain down from heaven in silver showers, as to provide for thy family and children without industry in thy calling. Solomon telleth us, 'the blessing of the Lord maketh rich,' and 'the diligent hand maketh rich,' Prov. xii. 24, and x. 4, 22.

As the nether millstone is heavy, slow, and of small riddance, yet the upper millstone, though of greater agility and quicker despatch, doth not grind without the nether, but both together make good meal; so the diligent hand of itself can do little, nay, nothing without the blessing of God; yet the blessing of God, though of infinite efficacy, will seldom do anything without the diligent hand, but both together make a person rich.

Besides, negligence about men's vocations is one great cause of corruption. The proud person is Satan's throne, and the idle man his pillow; he sitteth in the former, and sleepeth quietly on the latter. When men have nothing to do, the devil always sets them a-work: 'As a bird that wandereth from his nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place,' Prov. xxvii. 8. By *place*, the Holy Ghost understandeth particular callings. Now God had taken care that none should molest a bird in her nest, there she was safe, Deut. xxii. 6, 7; but when she begins to wander, then she is in danger, either to be shot by the fowler, or caught in the snare, or made a prey to other ravenous birds. So a man that is diligent in his calling, whilst he is employed therein, is in God's precincts, and so under God's protection; but when he wandereth abroad from his calling, going out of his bounds to sit and talk, he is a waif and a stray, and so falleth to the lord of the manor, 'the god of this world.'

Reader, thou mayest expect to be preserved whilst thou art a-working, but not when thou art wandering. Tertullian speaks of a Christian woman, who, going to a play, was possessed by the devil, and when he was asked by those that came to cast him out, how he durst possess one that was a Christian, he answered, I found her in my own place. Friend, they who, like Dinah, gad abroad, are often defiled before they come home. Those soldiers who leave their places in a march, and straggle to pilfer, are many times snapped and slain by their enemies, when they who keep their places are safe and secure. Oh mind thy calling in its place and

season, and know this for thy comfort, that whilst thou art about thy lawful work, observing Scripture rules in it, thou art under God's wing.

Secondly, Deal righteously in thy calling. Take heed of unjust gain. Believe this truth, 'A clear and clean conscience is infinitely better than a full purse. A little with the fear of the Lord is better than the possessions of many wicked men,' Ps. xxxvii. 15. A little wholesome food is better than a thousand poisoned dishes. All the wealth which is got in God's way is pleasant; but all the wealth which is got unjustly by wickedness is poison. 'The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and bringeth no sorrow of heart with it,' Prov. x. 22. Defrauding thy neighbour and cheating thy customers maketh rich, and bringeth the sorrow of hell with it. He that resolveth to be unrighteous, it is commonly said, may soon be rich. When the spring of conscience is screwed up to the highest pin, that it is ready to break, and godliness is locked up fast into an outhouse, and not suffered so much as to peep into the shop or warehouse, to take notice of what is done there, such a tradesman may gain silver, but alas! he loseth his precious Saviour, and his never-dying soul. Oh, what a dreadful gain is it to get earth with the loss of heaven! He that will be rich in haste, shall be poor enough in hell. 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven? Be not deceived, God will not be mocked,' 1 Cor. vi. 9. Do not think, reader, though thou canst cheat thy chapmen, that thou canst cozen God. No; he will not be mocked. He seeth thy false weights and false measures which thou ordinarily usest, though thou hast others to bring forth, for a colour, if occasion be; and he will deal justly with thee for thy injustice, by sending thee to that place where there is 'judgment without mercy.' I have read of an old rich covetous wretch, that, lying upon his death-bed, he asked his son whether he would not do anything that his father should desire him. His son answered, yea. Then, saith the father, hold your finger in the flame of that candle an hour. Sir, saith the son, I cannot possibly endure that. No, saith the father; I must burn for ever in hell, for raking up an estate unjustly for you, and yet you will not burn a finger one hour for me! O reader, if thou art guilty of this sin, think of it betimes. Thy ill-gotten wealth will breed those worms which will gnaw thee eternally! Besides, thou mayest think to raise thy house by such heaps; but God himself saith it is the way to ruin it. 'He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house,' Prov. xv. 27. Whilst he thinks to feather his nest, he doth indeed fire it. It is an ob-

servation of the house of Desmond, in Ireland, that Maurice, the first earl of that family, raised it by injustice; and by injustice Gerald, the last earl, ruined it. The crafty fox in the fable hugged himself that he had cozened the crow of his breakfast; but when he found himself poisoned therewith, he wished it out of his belly. Unjust gain, like the Italian buttered sponge, may go down glib, but it swelleth in the body, and never cometh away till it hath ruined the party. Such men spin a fair thread to strangle themselves with. 'The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death,' Prov. xxi. 6. Cornelius à Lapide hath a pretty fable, wherein he compareth men unjust in their dealings to spiders, the righteous to bees. The spider upbraided the bee for going up and down for honey. Thou stayest at home, saith the bee, but in thy working losest thy life. How often is that Latin proverb [1] fulfilled! The burden of salt returneth to the place whence it came. The occasion of which was the falling of salt by the wreck of a ship into the sea: the place whence it came. God often sendeth some to squeeze those muck-worms when they have sucked themselves full. Deceitful dealing, as a huge heap of ice by the sun, by the scorching fire of God's wrath dissolveth into nothing. 'As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool,' Jer. xvii. 11.

Thirdly, Be careful that thy particular calling encroach not upon thy general. Many lose religion in a crowd of earthly business. The interposition of the earth, as to the moon, eclipseth the light of their holiness. It is reported of the inhabitants of Oenoe, a dry island near Athens, that they bestowed much labour to draw in a river to water it, and make it fruitful; but when the passages were opened, the water came in so plentifully that it overflowed the island and drowned all the people. Many 'that will be rich,' by their extraordinary labours to make their flocks and fields fruitful, 'fall into temptations and snares, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown them in destruction and perdition,' 1 Tim. vi. 9. A candle that burns well above ground, when put under ground doth many times burn blue, and go out. The light of holiness which hath shined eminently in some professors, when they have had little to do with the world, hath been abated in a great degree when they have had great dealings. They, in regard of much business, have been like those in a mill, who cannot hear what is spoken by reason

[1] Salis onus unde venerat illuc abiit.—*Erasm. Adag.*

of the clacking and noise which is made there. Christ calleth, and the Spirit of God crieth to them, but their ears are stopped with earth that they hear not.

As we say of fire and water, they are good servants, but bad masters. Keep them within their bounds, and they are exceedingly useful; but when they go beyond their bounds, how hurtful are they! What mischief hath fire done in England! What sad work hath water made in Holland! The same is true of our particular callings: they are faithful servants, but they are dreadful masters. Keep them within their limits, and they are helpful to ourselves, our relations, and our neighbours; but suffer them once to transgress their bounds, and they will make miserable work. They will rob God, wrong the soul, nay, often ruin it eternally. When those that were born slaves and servants come once to be kings and commanders, they are ever the worst tyrants.

Now, if thou wouldst not have thy particular calling to encroach upon thy general, take heed that it steal not away thy heart, nor thy time.

1. Take heed that thy particular calling steal not away thy heart from thy general calling. If the mistress keep her distance, and maintain her authority over her maidens, she may find them obedient and serviceable; but if she grow fond of them, and familiar with them, they will grow saucy and encroach upon her. Reader, keep thy inward distance, and maintain that authority which God hath given thee over the things of this life, and then all will be well; but if once thou doatest on them, and delightest in them, expect to have them thine hindrances in all holy exercises. The world may have thy hands, but it must not have thy heart. Thy actions may be about thy particular calling, but thy affections must be above it. 'Set your affections on things above, and not on things below,' Col. iii. 2. Thy occupation is, as the first Adam, of the earth, earthly; but thy conversation must be like the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, heavenly. A Christian should follow the things of this world with such a slightness and indifferency of spirit as wicked men do the things of a better world. The holy angels behold our earthly affairs but as strangers to them. It is happy for him that can carry himself towards his own estate as if it were another man's. A heathen could say, I do not give, but only lend myself to my business.[1] Surely, then, a saint should go through the world as one in a deep study; his mind being the whilst intent upon a better object. Brutish horse-flies fasten on dunghills;

[1] Rebus non me trado sed commodo.—*Senec. De Benef.*

swallows make their nests of earth. They who have no heaven hereafter may give their hearts to the earth; but, Christian, if thou lovest thy soul, 'though riches increase, set not thine heart upon them,' Ps. lxii. 10. 'Love not the world, nor the things of the world.' This is a certain truth, The hotter thy love is to the world, the colder it is to the Lord. When the sap of worldliness is in a man, he will never flame well heavenward. The ship may sail in the water, and be safe; but when the water getteth into the ship, it sinketh it. Thou mayest work about thy earthly affairs, and all may be well; but if thine affairs once work themselves into thee, then thou art in danger. Thy God alloweth thee to warm thyself at the sun of creature comforts, but not to turn Persian and worship it.

The rivers lightly salute the earth as they pass along, and make no stay, but pass forward to the ocean. Thy affection should but slightly touch the earth, weeping for worldly crosses as if thou weepedst not, and rejoicing for worldly comforts as if thou rejoicedst not, and so pass on to the ocean of thy happiness. It is said, Germanicus reigned in the Romans' hearts, Tiberius only in the provinces. Thy general must reign in the city, in thy heart, thy particular calling only in the suburbs of thy hands. Reader, if the world ever get into the throne of thine inward man, farewell all religion. I have read of a custom among the Germans, to know whether their children be bastards or not, to throw them *in fluvium Rhenum*, into the river Rhine. If they floated above, then they acknowledged them to be their own; but if the waters carried them away, then they esteemed them as bastards. Truly, reader, if thou canst float above the waters of thy worldly employments, thou art a child of God; but if that carry thee away by lying near thy affections, look to thyself and fear thy condition. It is not the greatness of man's estate or employment, so much as the nearness of it to his heart, which will hinder holiness. A small hat held near our eyes will hinder our sight of the sun, which a great mountain afar off will not do. A little near the affections will hinder our sight of Christ, when thousands far from the heart may, as employed, further it. Besides, the closer we lay the flowers of our earthly mercies to our breasts, the sooner they wither. A nosegay in the hand will continue fresh and sweet, as is generally observed, much longer than when it is stuck in the bosom.

2. That thy particular calling may not encroach upon thy general, be careful that it steal not away thy time. Thy piety, reader, and thy prudence is so to order thine affairs relating to heaven and earth, to God and thy family, that they may not interfere or cross

each other. A wise forecast will much help thee in this particular. As to the winding a skein of silk, he that begins at the right end will make quick riddance of it; so to the despatching of worldly employments, that they may not prove heavenly impediments, he that hath discretion to forecast them well, may do very much. However, thy duty is to give the affairs of thy soul, and thy God, precedency. I know the devil and thy corrupt heart will often jostle and quarrel with thy closet and family duties, by suggesting to thee that they must of necessity be omitted, because otherwise such and such concernments of thy calling, upon which the welfare of thyself, wife, and children doth depend, will be neglected. As when Moses spake of the Israelites sacrificing to God, then Pharaoh spoke of work to put them off; so when thou art thinking of entering upon the performance of duties, whether in secret or private, thy back friend, the evil one, will send thee a message, either by thy wife, or friend, or thine unregenerate part, that some other affairs of weight call for thy company elsewhere, and therefore a dispensation must be granted thee at present, as to thy solemn devotion. Friend, if thou lovest Jesus Christ, take heed of hearkening to such temptations; let the flesh but once obtain such a conquest over thee, and thou shalt hear of it again, it will pursue its victory to purpose. Sin is a subtle sophister, it will bring arguments and reasons for all it doth, as is plain in Saul's sparing Agag, and the best of the flock. The beasts were to be sacrificed to God; and in Jeroboam's calves they were set up to save the Jews those tiresome journeys to Jerusalem; but 'take heed that thy heart be not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' Remember, piety is the best path to outward prosperity.

Aristotle, though a blind heathen, could see and say,[1] Make religion thy first and chief care, that thou mayest prosper. The Mohammedans are so sensible of this, that what occasion soever they have, they will pray five times a day; because the Jews suffered God's house to lie waste, therefore God blew upon their heaps and wasted their wealth.

He that stealeth away time from his general for his particular calling, like a thief in the candle, wasteth all; our work on earth is done best when our work in heaven is done first. Religious duties, in reference to our worldly occasions, is like sharpening the tools, which helpeth our work forward with more speed and ease. Mass and meat hinder no man's thrift, was a truth visible in the dark night of popery. He that neglecteth the service of his God for the

[1] Πρῶτα περὶ θεῶν, &c.—*Arist. Polit.* lib. vii. cap. 8.

following his trade, may put what he getteth into his eye, as our proverb is, and never see the worse; nay, like the gold of Toulouse, or the vineyard of Naboth to Ahab, the profit will be the perdition and ruin of the possessor. They who want time to do God's work, must want an eternity to receive God's reward. If men are so busy as not to attend their souls, God will be so busy as not to bestow salvation. I know farms, and oxen, and wives do hinder many from holiness; and I know also that they will hinder many from heaven, Luke xiv. 24, Mat. xxii. 5. That German prince who would not part with his silver to pay his soldiers, lost thereby his empire and treasure too. He that will not spare time from his present business for his future blessedness is like to lose both.

How much time dost thou squander away in long meals, in vain sports, in idle discourse, in superfluous sleep! and yet hast thou the face to tell God that thou hast no time in a whole day to seek his favour, and to mind thine eternal felicity? The truth is thou dost not so much want time as waste time.

Do not think that it will be a sufficient excuse at the last day to tell God that thy devotion was neglected, because thy earthly occasions abounded and pressed upon thee. If thy servant should tell thee, when he hath neglected thy business of concernment, that he could not help it, because he had business of his own to look after, a friend called him to the ale-house, wouldst thou think that a sufficient plea? Believe it, thy defence is far worse when thou omittest the service of God for thy particular calling.

The philosopher[1] could say, that he would rather neglect his means than his mind, and his farm than his soul. The very Turks, though they work their slaves hard, will yet allow them time every day for food and rest. Wilt thou, reader, deal worse with thy precious soul, than the Turks do with their galley-slaves? For shame, man, be not so cruel to thy best part.

A good Christian, if business crowd in upon him so much that he cannot wait on them, and worship God daily in his closet and family as he ought, will rather, like a wise mariner, when the ship is overburdened, cast some overboard, than endanger the loss of all and himself too. Times of earing and harvest were very busy times with the Israelites, yet then God would not allow them to make bold with him, Exod. xxxii. 21.

He that is a faithful and wise steward will give every one their portion, their meat in due season; as he will give his body and his family their portion every day, so he will give his God and his soul

[1] Aristippus apud Plat. de tranqu. animæ.

their portion every day; surely he is not faithful who attendeth the lacquey all day and neglecteth his lord; much worse is he who feedeth his flesh and starveth his spirit. Reader, take notice that there is a time for all things: as there are ploughing times, so there are praying times every day; as there is daily time for thy shop, so also for thy closet. When the Jewish daily sacrifice was intermitted, as in the days of Antiochus, it was 'the abomination of desolation.'

I am the larger in this particular, as observing that professors are exceedingly faulty in suffering the canker of their particular callings to devour and eat up the gold and silver of their general callings. Sometimes they will wholly omit family duties, because the world will not permit them to be at leisure; but too too often when they perform them, they turn them off with a short cut, in a huddling manner, as a physician his poor patients, though their business with him concern their lives, when rich men stand without, expecting to be called in, because the world stayeth at their doors to speak with them. Friend, as a special help against this soul-hindrance, let me persuade thee to be early in the morning at thy religious duties. Some men must be spoke to betimes in the morning, or not at all; their public affairs take up the whole day, and would if it were twice as long. The devil hath a thousand devices to make him an atheist all day, who neglecteth morning duties. Be not so hasty about thy calling in the morning, as to forget to take God along with thee. Remember this one note, If the world gets the start of religion in the morning, religion seldom overtaketh it all day. Something warm in the morning, before men go to work, is very wholesome. A warm prayer, warm communion with the blessed God, in meditating or reading, will help thee to work with more comfort and courage, and may prevent infections from ill fumes and vapours in the daytime. Job had a large family, much cattle; he had besides his domestical, much civil business, for he was a magistrate; yet Job 'rose up early in the morning to offer up sacrifice, and thus did Job continually,' chap. i. 5. In the daytime also, or at evening, let nothing put by the concernments of thy God, and thine everlasting estate; what company soever thou art in, say, as a devout soul I have read of, when his hour of prayer was come, You must excuse me, I must be gone; a friend, meaning his God, stayeth to speak with me.

Cato[1] repented of three things, one of which was, that he had spent a whole day idly. Truly, friend, if thou neglectest thy general calling, how busy soever thou hast been all day long about

[1] Plut. in Vit.

thy particular, I must tell thee, though an hour cannot be bought with the revenues of the whole earth, thou hast spent a whole day idly; and thou hast much cause to sigh out with the Roman emperor at night, when he had neither done nor received any good all day, *Hodie diem perdidi*, To-day I have lost a day.

Fourthly, If thou wouldst exercise thyself to godliness in thy particular calling, look up to God for a blessing upon thy labours therein. Creatures may be the object of thy diligence, but God alone the object of thy confidence; thy supplication must be to God, and thy expectation from God. Thou canst as soon by thine own power add a cubit to thy stature as a penny to thy purse: 'Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth,' Deut. viii. 18. All thy endeavours without God's blessing are but, as Cæsar said of Seneca's works, *arena sine calce*, sand without lime, they will not hang together. If God bless them, they prosper; if he blast them, they perish. The devil himself was so far orthodox, Job i. 10, 'Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.' Alas, the whole course of nature turneth only as it is moved by the hand of God. It is not in the frame of nature as in frames of art. When a watch is made, it may go though the workman be many miles off, or though he be dead; but there is not the least wheel in the frame of nature which doth not depend upon God for its motion every moment. As the vapours exhaled by the sun depend so much upon it that if that withdraw its influence they fall to the earth, so do the creatures depend on God; if he withdraw his influence from them, they presently come to nothing.

Take notice, reader, to instance but in one calling, how the genealogy of corn and wine, by a concatenation of causes, is resolved into Jehovah: 'I will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and wine, and oil; and they shall hear Jezreel,' Hosea ii. 21, 22; God hath the key of food under his own girdle, Ps. cxlv. 16. Hence some call the earth God's great purse, which he openeth for man's profit, and shutteth for man's punishment. The Jewish rabbis call the earth *alma parens*, a kind mother, and the rain her husband, because the showers do fecundate and make that great mother of plenty fruitful. But as likely a mother as the earth is to bring forth, she is barren unless God open her womb. 1. The ploughing and sowing of the ground is from God; the hands of men cannot do it without his protection and providence, and the heads of men would

not have thought of it without his direction and assistance, Isa. xxviii. 24 to the end. 2. When the ground is ploughed and sowed it must be watered, or the grain will quite die; this also is from God alone. The monarch of Mexico was wont to take an oath at his coronation that it should be what weather he pleased; but, 'Can any of the vanities of the heathen cause rain?' Jer. xiv. 22. God alone can unstop those bottles of heaven, they are all above man's reach; the most spongy clouds distil not one drop, no more than a rock, till God give the word of command. He *decreeth* rain, Job xxviii. 26; he *prepareth* rain, Ps. cxxxv. 7; and he *poureth down* the former and latter rain, Deut. xxviii. 12, Joel ii. 21, Job v. 10. He also covereth the body of the earth with the white mantle of snow, whereby the corn is warmed and the ground mellowed, Ps. clxvii. 16. 3. The stars—those purses of gold, as one calleth them, out of which God throweth down riches, which good men gather and bad men scramble for—are all at God's beck and bidding, Ps. xix. 4, 5, Mat. v. 45, Job xxxviii. 32. 4. The fruitfulness of the earth after it is ploughed, sowed, watered with the clouds, and warmed with the influence of the sun and stars, is wholly from God: 'Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness,' Ps. lxv. 11, Heb. vi. 7. This some of the heathen acknowledged by the light of nature;[1] and therefore when they went to plough in the morning they did lay one hand upon the plough, to speak their own part to be painfulness, and hold the other hand up to Ceres, the goddess of corn, to testify their expectation of plenty to be from their supposed deity. How easily can God blast all the corn in the field, or blow upon it in the barn! if he do but will it, it is done. The whole creation, indeed, is but a glass without a bottom, which cannot stand of itself, but as God is pleased to hold it up. The philosophers tell us, the sun and man beget a man, the sun and the earth bring forth corn, and speak of the sun in everything as a principle efficient. But the divines tell us more truly, God and the heavens, God and the earth, cause harvest. God, by the creatures, doth all things; God is the only principal efficient; the sun itself, and all other creatures, are but lifeless instruments, moved and acted by God according to his purpose and pleasure: 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. It is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, and to eat the bread of sorrows,' Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2. Apricot-trees that depend on their own strength, leaning on nothing, as experience teacheth us, bring forth little or no fruit, when they tha

[1] Weem's Cerem. Law.

lean on the wall abound in clusters. The way to thrive in thy trade is not to trust to thy own head or hands, but to trust in the Lord for a blessing on thy endeavours.

Fifthly, If thou dost prosper in thy calling, let God alone have the praise. Do not sacrifice to thy own net, Hab. i. 10, as the Jews, as though by thy skill and wisdom thou hadst met with such a draught, but consider the providence of God hath brought in all thy profit: 'Beware when thy herds and thine flock multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, lest thine heart be lifted up, and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hands hath gotten me this wealth,' Deut. viii. 14–18. Man is apt to make himself his idol, and to attribute all to his own pains and prudence. Men boast, saith Luther,[1] *Hoc ego feci*, and *hoc ego feci*, and shew themselves to be mere *fæces*. They brag, this I have done, and this I have done, and thereby appear to be nothing but dregs. God took it ill that Tyrus should say, 'By my traffic and my wisdom I have increased my wealth;' and telleth her that she had 'set her heart as the heart of God,' Ezek. xxviii. 3–5.

The Israelites were commanded to bring their first ripe fruits to God, whereby they acknowledged him the owner and author of all their increase, Exod. xxiii. 16, 19; Lev. xxiii. 10.

The very heathen were somewhat sensible of this. The Metapontines,[2] after a plentiful harvest, which had much enriched them, dedicated a harvest cut in gold to Apollo, their god: 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion: for he maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat,' Ps. cxlvii. 12–14. When God sendeth thee in profit, thy duty is to give him praise. Do not bury God's mercies, as the barren earth the seed, that when once it is thrown into the ground we hear no more of it. God expecteth, as the trees by their leaves in autumn pay their tribute of thanks to the earth, the mother of their fruitfulness, so that we should honour him when he heapeth favours on us.

Some men are like fishermen's weels, wide to receive in mercies; but there is no passage out for the returning of praises. Those places where the rivers are shallowest make the greatest sound; those where they are deepest are most silent. Men while they are poor, sound with prayers, make a great noise for mercies; but when God blesseth them with wealth, they are silent in regard of thanks; they are lifted up with pride, but look not up to God with praise.

[1] Luther in Ps. cxxvii.

[2] Strabo Geog.

It is reported[1] of Willigis, a wheeler's son, that being made archbishop of Mentz, and one of the prince electors in Germany, he did constantly acknowledge God's great providence in his great preferment; and therefore gave in his coat of arms three wheels, with this motto, written in his bedchamber in great letters, *Willigis, Willigis, recole unde veneris*—Willigis, Willigis, remember from whence thou comest! Thus holy Jacob in his prosperity remembered both his former poverty and his present plenty, to its author's praise, 'O God of my father Abraham, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and all thy truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant: for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands,' Gen. xxxii. 9, 10. So do thou, reader, when God blesseth the work of thy hands, ponder his goodness, that thou mayest give him his praise, and think of thy own unworthiness; thereby thou mayest be preserved from pride. It is reported of that noble captain Iphicrates, that being enriched, he should cry out, From how small, to how great an estate am I raised!

Sixthly, Labour for contentedness, and a holy composedness in all conditions: 'Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' Heb. xiii. Thy duty is, to have the scales of thy mind equally poised in all providences; not rising in prosperity through lightness, nor sinking in adversity under the heaviness of the load. As the tree bendeth this way and that way with the wind, but still keepeth its place; so thou mayest yield according to the gales of providence, but still retain and keep thy standing, thy piety. If thine estate decrease, let not thine heart despair; if the world flow in, let not thine heart flow out. Oh, it was an excellent lesson which Paul had learned; 'I know in what state soever I am to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; I know how to be full and how to be empty,' Phil. iv. 11. Paul was not like a musical instrument, out of tune with every change of weather; but like a cypress-tree, which no storms, naturalists tell us, can alter; and like the hill Olympus, above all winds and weather.

Some men are like the leaves of a tree, which every wind sets a-shaking and trembling; or like a bone out of joint, which a man cannot stir without pain: if the world do but frown upon them, you may see it in their faces, they are quite dejected with sorrow. Oh, how heavy presently are their hearts, as if they had lost their heaven!

[1] Cælius Lect. Antiq., lib. xiii. cap. 1.

It is to be feared that bough is rotten, which breaketh if but a little weight be hung upon it. A godly man should be like a rock, immoveable, though high winds and boisterous waves of providence blow and beat upon him; and like a die, however he be thrown, always to fall upon a square. The traveller need not murmur, though his inn afford him but mean fare, and a hard bed, when he knoweth that he must be gone next morning. The ox is not happier, which hath two or three mountains to graze on, than the bee which feedeth upon that dew which falleth daily from the storehouse of heaven. If thou hast secured thine everlasting estate, the boundless God is thy portion, and surely then thou mayest be like a spring full, under the most scorching providence.

It was a worthy speech of Mr Bradford, the martyr, to one who asked him whether he should petition the queen for his life. If the queen will take away my life, I will thank her; if she will give me my life, I will thank her; if she will banish me, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her; let her deal with me how she pleaseth, I will thank her. So, reader, thy heart will be in an excellent frame indeed, if thou canst thank God when he enricheth thee, and thank him when he impoverisheth thee; if thou canst thank him when he smiles on thee with the light of his countenance, and thank him also if he frowns by some sad providence; if thou canst thank him when he is at addition, and thank him when he is at subtraction; thank him giving to thee, and thank him taking from thee. Oh, here is a heart worth gold indeed. Truly the want of this calmness and composedness of mind is a great impediment to Christians. Alas, when their spirits are like some men's flesh, no sooner raised with a pin, but they rankle and fester; no sooner touched with a light affliction, but they faint and are dejected; how unfit are they for religious actions! as men in extremity of pain, they rather chatter than pour out a prayer. Either men must use the world as if they used it not, or they will serve the Lord as if they served him not. He who knoweth that nothing can befall him whilst he is diligent in his calling, but what is the fruit of bottomless love, and the result of infinite wisdom, may certainly be steady in the greatest storm. Thrice happy is that soul, who hath so much care of doing his work, and such an eye to the recompence of reward, that the allurements and affrightments of the world, though they may assault the outworks, can never surprise the royal fort of his heart.

The only way, reader, to find thine own will, is, to lose it in God's will; those that grumble at his doings, and quarrel at his dealings,

do but like a bull in the net, and the silly bird among the lime-twigs, by struggling entangle themselves the more. Unsubmissiveness to God's will is the fountain of all man's woe; the quiet resignation of our persons and portions to God's pleasure is the only sleeping pill which can give rest to the soul. Christian, let me ask thee this question, Didst thou give up thyself to Christ for temporal, or for eternal comforts? Didst thou enter upon religion to save thine estate, or thy soul? Oh, why then shouldst thou be so sad, when thine eternal happiness is so safe? For shame, live like a child of God, an heir of heaven; and let the world know, that thy hopes and happiness are in a better world; that though thou art denied those acorns which thy father giveth to his hogs, yet thou hast the children's bread, and expectest thine inheritance when thou comest to age.

Thus I have despatched the fourth particular, how a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in his particular calling.

A good wish about particular callings, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

My particular calling being a peculiar and distinct station, wherein I am bound to be serviceable to my country and family, and wherein also I have this privilege, that I may further my general calling, if I mind it out of conscience to the Lord, and in obedience to his word, I wish, in general, that I may never cross the wise providence of my God, in the government of the world, by neglecting it, or thinking lightly of it; but since I am listed under the captain of my salvation, may serve him faithfully, not only in general as a soldier, but also in that place or office to which he hath chosen and called me. I wish, in particular, that what my hand findeth to do, I may do it with all my might. That I may be of the number of them that spend themselves with labour, and not of them who waste with rust and laziness; my diligence herein is some help against the temptations of the devil. The sluggard's heart is like his field, overgrown with weeds. Lord, let me rather wear out by work, than consume, like a garment laid by with moths, for want of use. Yet I wish that I may not by my industry make more haste to be rich than good speed—I mean, that I may never increase my riches by dealing unrighteously in my calling, knowing that unjust gain is a morsel which the strongest stomach in the world cannot possibly digest, but may esteem a penny got by the blessing of God

upon my honest labour, at a far greater price than thousands of pounds by rapine and robbery, and may weigh all my wares in the scales of loving my neighbour as myself, by the standard of that royal law, 'Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets.' Oh that I might not upon any pretence whatsoever, either by taking advantage of the buyer's ignorance, or by putting unserviceable wares into his hands, or by false weights and measures, or by defrauding my neighbour any other way, 'Consult shame to my house, and sin against my own soul,' Hab. ii. 10. But when I am in my shop or warehouse, or instructing my servant how to sell, I may hear the sound of that dreadful threatening against unrighteous dealers in mine ears, 'He hath swallowed down riches, he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly,' Job xx. 15. 'He shall suck the poison of asps; the viper's tongue shall slay him; the increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.' I desire that I may watch my calling, as they who make powder do their fire, with my greatest care, to keep it within its own bounds, that I may so give to the world the things of the world, as to give to my God the things of God. To this end I wish that I may not, like Demas, embrace this present world, but how deep soever I wade in earthly affairs, may be sure to keep my head, I would say my heart, above water, lest I sink and perish in them eternally. Lord, though I possess outward things, yet let outward things never possess me. I am married to thy sacred Majesty; though I converse with my calling as a friend, yet let the bed of my heart never be defiled therewith, but reserved only for thy blessed self to lodge in. My prayer is, that my earthly traffic may never be suffered to play the thief, and to steal away that precious treasure of time, which at least morning and evening my heavenly trade requireth in my closet and family: but though like the eagle I stoop to the earth for my prey, my outward provision, I may not dwell there, but mount up again to heaven. Oh that I might be deaf to all the vain excuses which the world will plead for the total omission or shortening of religious exercises, and even when a real necessity, not through any negligence of mine, appeareth by some sudden providence, I am denied time to draw the long sword of solemn devotion, I may be then so affected with my duty and danger, as to draw the short dagger of ejaculatory petitions, to defend myself against my spiritual enemies. My God never intended that my trade should be my trouble, or my calling like the clouds to impede my sight of the true Sun; there-

fore if so much business lie upon my hands, that if that be attended my soul must be neglected, let me rather, as a wise traveller, ease myself of some part of my burden, than permit it to hinder me in my journey to heaven.

I desire that I may be so sensible that good things here below come from the most high God, and the success of my labours dependeth more on his providence than my diligence, that I may never in a morning open my shop, or lift up a tool, as my trade is, before I have opened my heart, and lifted up my soul to my God for his blessing upon my endeavours. All creatures in the hands of my God are as dead tools in the hands of a living workman, by whose force and influence alone they act. Lord, let me never look upon second causes as more than the order in which, and the means with which, thou art pleased to work. I wish that if God shall by my calling increase my wealth, I may not sacrifice to my own nets, nor burn incense to my own drags, but may be so spiritual as to acknowledge my God the author of temporals, and receive them so thankfully from his hand of bounty, that I may improve them faithfully, as may be most for his glory. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; he is the owner of all I enjoy, I am but his steward, and must shortly give account of my stewardship. Oh let me make me friends of the unrighteous mammon, that I may be trusted with the true riches; let my whole estate be employed according to thy word, for the furtherance of my own everlasting weal.

Finally, I wish that I may sail trim and even in all waters; that when it is full tide in regard of outward comforts, I may not swell with pride; nor when it is low water, grumble through peevishness. Murmuring is the music of hell, holy contentedness is the foretaste of heaven. Why should I rejoice my worst enemy, and dishonour my best friend, by being fretful at that which the only wise God seeth to be fit and needful? The lean ox is fitter for service than the fatted one. The true Israelite may well be satisfied in his journey to Canaan with his homer a day, with his statute-measure, and his Father's allowance. What though my Father deny me that entertainment at present, which he giveth to strangers; yet I have his love now, and the inheritance hereafter shall be mine. 'My God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' Lord, let me never discredit thy housekeeping, by my grumbling carriage or frowning countenance; but so, by the prospective-glass of faith, behold those things which are invisible, that I may in all things

give thanks; like some birds, sing even in winter, and as clothes dyed in grain, retain my colour in all weathers; that 'when the fig-tree doth not blossom, nor the vine yield her fruit; when the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields yield no meat; then I may rejoice in the Lord, and be glad in the God of my salvation.' In a word, I wish that I may, like the wise merchant, sell all I have to buy the pearl of great price; the gold tried in the fire, that I may be rich; the white raiment, that I may be clothed; and drive such a constant trade with my God in the other world, bearing from thence, and sending thither daily, that when the king of terrors shall give me a writ of ease from my particular calling, I may die in the Lord, rest from my labours, and have my works following me through free grace, into an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Amen.

A good wish about the calling of a minister; wherein the several properties and duties of a conscientious pastor are epitomised.

The ministry of the word being a calling above all others of greatest weight, as set up by the ever-blessed God, for the payment of himself the deserved praise of his curious, eternal, and infinitely wise purpose; and for the payment of the Lord Jesus Christ, the precious fruits of his bloody passion, by the turning of sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; in which he is pleased to commit to men, duly qualified and rightly called, the word of reconciliation, and commandeth them in his name, as his ambassadors, to offer terms of peace, and to persuade and beseech rebellious sinners, with all earnestness and faithfulness, as they would not have the blood of their people's souls required at their hands, to accept of and submit to those articles of grace and pardon,—I wish, in general, that since my God hath counted me faithful, put me into the ministry, and intrusted me with that which so nearly relateth to his own glory, and which so highly concerneth the eternal felicity of precious souls, that I may take heed to myself, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made me overseer, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. In particular, I wish that I may know experimentally what regeneration meaneth, before I travail with others, till Christ be formed in them; that I may dissuade from compliance with sin, and persuade to a hearty acceptance of the Saviour, not by hearsay or at second-hand, but upon

my own knowledge of the bitterness of the former, and the goodness and sweetness of the latter. Let me not, like some cooks, dress that meat for others which I eat not of myself. Let not my sermons be, as Minerva, the children of my brain, but the travail of my soul, that I may serve my God with my spirit in the gospel of his Son; and as a true vessel of the sanctuary, have within me a savour of that water of life which I pour out to others. It is doleful to fall into hell from under the pulpit; but ah, how dreadful is it to drop thither out of it! Doth not my heart tremble to think that it is possible for me, like the unbelieving spies, to coast the heavenly Canaan, to commend it to others, and yet never to possess it myself? that whilst I preach to others, I myself may be a castaway? Lord, let me so exalt thee in my heart, as my chiefest good; in my life, as mine utmost end; and preach so effectually to my own soul and to others', that I may both save myself and them that hear me.

I wish that the spring of my motions, and principle of all my work, may be love to my Master, and not expectation of any temporal reward. That I may never be so sordidly sinful as to sell the incomparable Saviour for a little corruptible silver; to turn my Father's house into a house of merchandise; and to cry up my God, as the Ephesians their goddess, because by that craft they had their wealth; but that unfeigned affection to the bleeding head, and tender compassion to his blessed members, may be all the oil to feed that lamp wherewith I enlighten others in the way to life. Oh that that pathetical affectionate expression of my dearest Redeemer might sound often in mine ears, and pierce my very soul, 'If thou lovest me, feed my lambs; if thou lovest me, feed my sheep.'

I desire that my ends in the ministry may be purely to exalt the glorious name of my God, in the conversion and edification of his precious and chosen ones. That I may not use preaching, as a thief a picklock, to open men's coffers, but as a key to open their hearts, that the truth of God, and the God of truth, may enter in. Why should I profane so pious an ordinance by so poisonous an end, and serve myself like the eagle, by having my eye to the prey whilst I soar aloft, and pretend to the world that I serve my Saviour? Let me not like Balaam, divine for money, nor through covetousness, with feigned words, make merchandise of inestimable souls, which Christ thought worth his precious blood. Oh that I might seek not my people's goods, but good; not my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved. Lord, let this design lie at the bottom of my heart in every act of my office, that I may, as Abra-

ham's steward, provide a wife for my master's son; and enable me through thine help, so to set forth the beauty of his person, the excellency of all his precepts, and the vastness of his portion, that I may woo to purpose, and prevail to present my people as a chaste virgin unto Christ.

I wish, that because the work I am occupied about is great, in regard it is not for man, but for the Lord, that I may, as Bezaleel and Aholiab for the service of the sanctuary, be singularly gifted and endowed by my God, for the building of his spiritual temple; that, as a wise builder, I may lay the foundation of sound doctrine, raise it up strong pillars of convincing reasons, and cover it with useful and powerful application. I would not, like some young shopkeepers, for want of stock, set out pictures of wares instead of parcels; but be so thoroughly furnished unto every good work, that I may, upon all occasions, bring out of my treasury things both new and old. Lord, let a double portion of thy Spirit be poured on me, and let thy blessing so prosper my studies, that I may be an 'able minister of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,' 2 Cor. iii. 6.

I wish, that since I am a steward of the mysteries of Christ, and that it is required of a steward that he be found faithful, that I may upon no pretence be false to the souls of my people; that I may not daub with untempered mortar, or sow pillows under men's elbows for any gain or advantage, but may be a Barnabas, a son of consolation to the penitent; a Boanerges, a son of thunder to the presumptuous, that, knowing the terror of the Lord, I may persuade men, and give to every one their particular and proper portion in due season. Oh let me not be curious to provide meat toothsome for polluted palates, to the feeding of their distempers—like Ahab's four hundred trencher-chaplains, who sold their lord's life at the cheap rate of a lie—but as Micaiah, be careful to distribute food that is wholesome and suitable to their several spiritual constitutions. Though my patients may be angry at present, when I search their festered wounds to the bottom, and thereby put them to pain, yet, when upon my faithful dealing they recover, they will give me hearty thanks. It was the saying of Mauritius the emperor, when he heard that Phocas was a coward, If he be a coward, he is a murderer. If I be fearful to tell men of their sins, I murder their souls. Lord, when I am visiting my parishioners in private, or preaching to them in public, cause me to hear thy voice behind me: 'When I say unto the wicked, that he shall surely die; and thou

givest him no warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, that he may live; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquities; but his blood will I require at thine hand,' Ezek. iii. 18.

I desire that I may not be obnoxious to the censure of a wicked and slothful servant; not of wicked, by hiding my sins in the cloak of excuses; nor of slothful, by hiding my talent in the napkin of idleness; but may mind the work of the ministry, and make it appear that both in my preparation for, and execution of my office, I labour in the word and doctrine. My time and parts are not mine own, but, under God, my people's, and to be improved for their profit. If men die for robbing single persons, what shall befall me, should I be such a thief as to rob the poor, the rich, and indeed the whole parish's stock? My prayer is, that I may not offer to the Lord my God that which cost me nothing; that my meat, which I set before the family committed to my charge, may not be, like Ephraim, half-baked, raw or crude, and so unmeet for their stomachs to concoct, because of my negligence in preparing it; that I may 'give attendance to reading; meditate on those things; give myself wholly to them; that my profiting may appear to all men,' 1 Tim. iv. 13, 15. They that spend upon the main stock where it is but small, will quickly prove bankrupts. My layings-out are considerable, my comings-in had need to be answerable. Surely, if any in the world should feed high, should study, read, and pray hard, those should do it who carry so many in their wombs, or give so many suck. I wish that I may be industrious as well in rearing the temple as in providing materials, that I may cheerfully 'spend, and be spent in the service of Christ.' My Saviour was taken to be fifty when he was little above thirty, by reason of his excessive industry; his very countenance was aged. O my soul, follow thou this blessed pattern. Do not play, 'but work the work of him that sent thee in the Lord.' Improve all opportunities to the utmost, be instant in season and out of season, serve thy God with all thy strength; like fuel, consume thyself in burning to warm the spirit of the saint, and to thaw the frozen heart of the sinner. Thy work is of infinite consequence, thy time is exceeding short, thy reward is glorious and eternal. 'Up, and be doing,' and, like the silkworm, wear out thine own bowels to hide others' nakedness; waste thyself to prevent thine own and others' endless woe. Be thou a fruitful mother to conceive and bring forth new creatures, though thou conceivest with sorrow, and bringest forth with much pain, and thy labours at last should cost thee thy life.

I desire that I may be tenderly affected to all the souls in my charge, as knowing their worth, and believing of what concernment their unchangeable estates are in the other world. Lord, what melting bowels should I have towards them, when I consider that every one of them must die within a few days, and either live in heaven, or fry in hell to all eternity! My Saviour was a faithful and merciful high priest. He had compassion on the multitude when they had nothing to eat, and would not send them away empty, lest they should faint in the wilderness. Oh that I had but that pity for the souls which he had to the bodies of men! Nature will help me to pity a body without a soul; why should not grace teach me to pity a soul without a God? Lord, when I behold wounded, bleeding, dying souls, let mine eyes affect my heart with sorrow, that both mine eyes and heart may be up to thee, with the greatest importunity for a blessing upon my most diligent endeavours for their recovery. Make me so tender and affectionate a mother, that I may patiently bear with the frowardness, and willingly go through with the burden of instructing my children. Though others nurse children for the love of wages, let me nurse mine for the wages of love. Let all my actions towards them flow from sincere affection to them; and not only my counsel and comforts, but even my rod of reproof, like Jonathan's, be dipped in this honey. When I am rebuking them cuttingly, and frighting them from sin with the fear of the unquenchable fire, let all my bitter pills be given in this sweet syrup of love, that they may know and acknowledge my greatest anger against their sins to proceed from a tender respect and love to their immortal souls.

I wish that, being a sworn soldier of the Lord of hosts, whatsoever trials and tribulations I meet with in my holy warfare, whatsoever dangers and death shall look me in the face, I may never fly from my colours, or forsake my captain, but 'endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.' When I first listed myself in his muster-roll, I understood the grievous hardships and various hazards which all his army, but especially his officers, must encounter with; that to preach the gospel is, as Luther saith, to draw the hatred of the whole world upon a man; yea, that earth and hell would both conspire and plant their strongest batteries against the bulwarks of the church, (under God,) the ministers of the word; notwithstanding all which I entered my name as a volunteer, and promised to live and die in his quarrel; and shall I now, because the enemies appear numerous, and the bullets fly thick, like Peter, deny my righteous cause, and disown my glorious

captain? Lord, let me die with thee rather than deny thee; enable me through thy strength to be ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. My only safety consisteth in keeping close to my Saviour; should I, through cowardliness, run away, I must expect martial law. 'If any man draw back, thy soul will have no pleasure in him.' If I, like Jonah, should run from thy presence, as unwilling to deliver an unwelcome message, I must expect a storm to follow after me, and either the waves to swallow me up, or the whale to swallow me down; I should but go out of thy blessing into the warm sun. If the service of my God be not in all respects the best, why did I choose and like it? If it be, why should I refuse and leave it? My cause is good, I fight against sin and Satan, the desperate and bloody enemies of my soul; my crown is better; after a temporal conflict, followeth an eternal crown of glory. 'O my soul, be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt have a crown of life.' But my captain is best of all; he looketh upon me, goeth before me, fighteth for me; and as he leadeth me on to this trial, so he will not, like the devil and the world, who leave their servants and lovers in the lurch, but bring me off with triumph, either safe on earth, or safe to heaven. Lord, whatsoever dirt of calumny shall be thrown in my face, whatsoever dart of cruelty shall be stuck in my body, for keeping the word of thy patience in an hour of temptation, yet let none of these things move me, neither let me count my life dear unto me, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the grace of God, Acts xx. 22.

As to the preaching of the gospel, which is the principal work of the minister, as being the main engine in the hand of God, wherewith he undermineth and overturneth the strongholds of sin and the kingdom of darkness, I wish that I may prepare for this work diligently, ever handle this weapon warily, deliver the message of my God soberly, as may be most for his glory and my people's good, not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. To this end I desire that all my sermons may be, like Monica's son, children of many prayers and tears, and thereby the more unlikely to perish. Luther saith, He that prayeth hard, studieth hard. Lord, let all my sermons, as dew, be heaven-born, that they may drop down upon my people like rain upon the mown grass. Let prayer be the key to open the mysteries of Christ to me, and let prayer be the turning of the key, to lock them up safe within me. Let prayer open and

shut all my books, form and write, begin and conclude every sermon. Ah, how should he pray both for his preaching, and before he preacheth, who, by every sermon, preacheth his beloved neighbours into eternal burnings, or eternal pleasures!

I wish also, for the furtherance of the former ends, that I may preach over every sermon to my own heart before I preach them to my hearers; that I, preaching feelingly, may preach the more effectually; and the milk of the word coming warm out of the mother's breasts, may be, as more natural, so more pleasing and nourishing to the children. Why should I, like a lawyer, plead the cause of my God, for my fees, and not at all have my own person concerned in it? Oh let me rather, as a physician, drink of those potions myself, which I prescribe and administer to my patients.

I desire that I may never dare to play the huckster with the word of God, to sophisticate or adulterate it by my additions to it, but that I may receive from the Lord what I deliver to men, and feed all my charge with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. If it be treason to counterfeit the king's coin, what high treason is it for me to imprint the King of king's stamp on my brass money! Oh that, as I am an ambassador, I might keep close to my instructions; and as a builder, may lay every stone in his temple by the line and rule of his word; and as a physician, may never try experiments upon the souls of my people, but hold fast to the form of wholesome words, and ever prescribe those tried and approved receipts, which the great physician hath left me under his own hand. Because my work is to touch and pierce my hearers' hearts, and not to tickle and please their ears, I wish that I may preach a crucified Saviour in a crucified style; that I may not blow up my sermons, as butchers some joints of meat, to make them show fairer, with a windy pomp of words; but by using all plainness, and stooping to the lowest capacity, may 'become all things to all men, that I may save some.' I am a barbarian to my people, whilst I preach to them in an unknown language; I starve their souls, whilst I give them such meat as they can never digest. Let me not read authors, as the butterfly goeth to flowers, only to gild her wings; but as the bee, to gather honey, and bring it home to the hive for the supply of her young. Lord, let me never be guilty, by painting the windows, of hindering the light of thy glorious gospel from shining powerfully into the hearts of men and women.

My prayer is, that I may not strengthen the hands of sinners, nor sadden the hearts of the godly, but be able to distinguish

between the vile and the precious, and accordingly give them their several portions: that I may give milk to babes, and strong meat to stronger men; order my prescriptions suitable to their particular constitutions; use the needle of the law to make way for the thread of the gospel; and lead my sheep, as Jacob drove his flock, as they were able to bear it, and as Christ taught his, as they were best able to hear him. Oh that I might not only preach prudently, but also powerfully; that my sermons may be delivered, not as prologues to a play, as matter of sport or pastime, but as the message of a herald, with all imaginable seriousness and fervency, as containing conditions of life and death. The word is a hammer, but it will never break the stony heart if lightly laid on; what is preached coldly, is heard carelessly. Lord, let me not, like the moon, give some light without any heat, but cause me to lift up my voice like a trumpet; to give, as fire, heat as well as light; to be eaten up with the zeal of thine house; to beseech poor souls to be happy, with as much fervency as if I were begging for my life; and to preach so successfully that I may raise up much spiritual seed to my elder brother.

I wish that all my parishioners, without exception, may have so deep a share in my affection, upon a religious account, that without ceasing I may make mention of them always in my prayers; that my heart's desire and prayer to God, both in secret, private, and public, for poor and rich, may be, that they may be saved. Oh let me daily offer sacrifice for them, confess their iniquities, bewail their misery, and cry mightily to God for mercy. Lord, let me prevail with thy Majesty to speak to their hearts, and I shall prevail with them to hearken to thee; yea, I shall stand before thee at the last day with courage, and say, 'Behold, here am I, and the children which thou hast given me.'

Because the small keels of children are quickly overturned, when they meet with the high winds of temptations, as they sail along in the sea of this world, if they be not ballasted with the principles of the oracles of God; I pray that I may be a diligent instructer of babes, and a faithful teacher of the simple. That I may season, through God's help, those new vessels with the precious water of life, that they may retain their savour to their old age; that the younger amongst my people may, from their childhood, know the holy Scriptures, be wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I wish, that in the administration of the sacraments, I may have an impartial regard to the fitness and meetness of the subjects, lest I set those precious seals of the covenant of grace to blanks, whereby

they should signify nothing, especially that about the Lord's supper, as I would not be partaker of other men's sin, nor be an instrument of furthering their eternal suffering, I may be tender, and walk altogether by the rule of Scripture. Oh let me never pollute that sacred ordinance, by giving it to profane persons; nor be so prodigal of my dearest Saviour's blood and body, as to give those holy things to dogs, and to cast those pearls before swine, who will trample them under their feet. Ah, it is much better that such scandalous sinners should be angry with me on earth, for my wholesome severity, than curse me for ever in hell for my foolish pity and soul-damning flattery.

I wish that, like a faithful shepherd, I may often visit my flock, and warn every one night and day with tears; and not as a careless non-resident, expose them to the rage and cruelty of the devouring wolf, by my absence from them, or by my negligence when present among them; lest another day, when it is too late, they cry to me, and complain of me, Sir, if thou hadst been here our souls had not died. The priest under the law visited the suspected or leprous houses, inquired how it was with them; and as he found it so gave sentence. Oh that I might, under the gospel, visit diseased hearts, and diligently inquire how things stand betwixt the great God and their poor souls, and give them suitable, savoury, and profitable advice. Though I, therefore, desire a great auditory, because among many fish there is the greater probability that the baits of the gospel will take and catch some, yet therefore I should desire a small parish, because thereby I am in the greater capacity to deal with every one in it in particular about the concernments of their everlasting peace. Lord, let thy strict command frequently come into my mind, 'I charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and his kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine,' 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

I wish that I may be as the Baptist, both a burning light in my sermons, and a shining light in my conversation, lest my works give the lie to my words; whilst I, as Mercury, direct others in the right way, but walk not in it myself. The priests under the law had their Urim and Thummim, signifying purity of doctrine and sanctity of life; a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, typifying that preaching and practice must go together. Oh that I might preach as powerfully by my life as by my lips; and, like a faithful nurse, avoid the scandals of distempers, and even forbear

those meats which I love, though lawful in themselves, when not expedient, not only for my own sake, but also for their sakes to whom I give suck. Nazianzen saith of him that was the 'voice of one crying in the wilderness,' that he was all voice, a voice in his habit, a voice in his diet, a voice in his conversation. Lord, enable me in all things so to shew myself a pattern of good works to my people, Tit. ii. 7, to be such an example to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity, 1 Tim. iv. 12, that I may be able to say to my flock, as Paul to his Philippians, 'Brethren, be followers together of me,'—and to his Corinthians, 'Be followers of me as I am of Christ,' 1 Cor. xi. 1—'and mark them which walk so as ye have me for an ensample,' Phil. iii. 17.

I wish, that though my labours should prove unfruitful, when I in the discharge of my trust am faithful, that I may not be discouraged, knowing that I shall be a 'sweet savour to my God, as well in them that perish as in them that are saved.' And 'though Israel be not gathered by me, but I spend my strength in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.' Yet, oh that I might not be sent about that dreadful message, to make the hearts of any people fat, to make their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed, Isa. vi. 10; but that I may turn many sinners from the errors of their ways, save many souls from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

I wish that as Joab, when he took the city of Rabbah with David's soldiers, was willing to have the crown set on the king's head; so when my God hath enabled me by his Spirit to cast down imaginations and high things that exalted themselves against the knowledge of him, and to bring into captivity many sinners to the obedience of Christ, that I may set the crown of glory upon the head of God alone, and not suffer the least part of his honour to stick to my fingers. I am but the instrument, he is the principal efficient; I am but the pipe, he is the spring whence the water of life floweth; I do but lay on the plaster, he made the precious salve of the word, and bestoweth also healing virtue on it. Oh that I might never be so ungrateful, when he is pleased to honour me, as to dishonour him by thinking of myself above what is meet, but that all my services may be as so many scaffolds, erected purposely for the raising of his name, and the setting up of his praise.

Finally, I wish that I may take heed to myself, to my doctrine, to my life, be watchful in all things, endure affliction, make full

proof of my ministry, do the work of a faithful pastor, lest, as they who prophesied in Christ's name, and in his name cast out devils, I be cast to devils as a worker of iniquity, and find that gate of life which I opened to others shut against my own soul, 1 Tim. iv. 16; 2 Tim. 4, 5; and Mat. vii. 21, 23. Oh let me not, as porters in great houses, lodge without myself whilst I let others into heaven; let it please thee, O God of all grace, to fill me with the fruits of thy Spirit, that I may feed thy people with knowledge and understanding; 'take the oversight of them, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; not as being a lord over God's heritage, but as being an example to the flock. That so when the chief shepherd shall appear, (on the great day in which the sheep shall be separated from the goats,) I may receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away,' 1 Pet. v. 2–4. Amen.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in his family as the governor thereof.

It is thy duty to exercise thyself to godliness in thy family and relations. A Christian must not, like the Israelites' pillar in the wilderness, be light on one side and dark on the other, be diligent in one relation and negligent in another; but as a candle in a crystal lantern, be lightsome quite round it, be holy in every relation in which he standeth.

Reader, I shall consider thee as governor or governess of a family, and herein direct thee what thou shouldst do for the faithful discharge of thy trust in that relation.

Houses under the law were to be dedicated to God at their first setting up, Deut. xx. 5; which was done, saith Ainsworth on the place, with singing and praising God, as well as feasting. David's psalm, Ps. xxx. *vide* title, at the dedication of his house, is worthy our imitation. Hezekiah,[1] upon the law touching the sanctifying a house to God, Lev. xxvii. 14, 15, giveth this exposition, That to dedicate or sanctify an house to God, is for the governor to be careful for the instruction of his family, and the religious conversation of his household: that his house may be God's house, and his children God's children, and his servants God's servants.

A family is a natural and simple society of certain persons, hav-

[1] Qu., 'Hesychius'?—*Ed.*

ing mutual relation one to another, under the private government of one head or chief. Aristotle calleth families the first society in nature, and the ground of all the rest. Before the flood, the whole form of civil and ecclesiastical government was confined within the precincts of private families. A family is the epitome of a kingdom and a commonwealth in a little volume. The way to make godly parishes, and godly countries, and godly kingdoms, is to make godly families. When sin as a plague spreadeth abroad, it beginneth in families: one atheistical family defileth and destroyeth many; it sendeth a son into one house, a daughter into another, a servant into a third, and every of them, like infectious persons, poison those with whom they converse: like a nest of foxes, they destroy and devour all the country over. As one house on fire often burneth down many; so one profane family injureth many: one godly family, on the contrary, doth good to many. As one stock of bees sendeth forth swarms and honey into many parts of the country; so one religious family, sending religious children and servants abroad, (they come in time to have families of their own,) may bring much honour to God, and be helpful to the eternal welfare of many souls.

A godless family, like a gun or cannon, killeth at a distance, as their swearing children and drunken servants come to spread abroad. A gracious family, like the weapon-salve, healeth at a distance, as the pious relations in it come to be dispersed in other places. Solomon was a religious housekeeper; and it is observable, his servants were so seasoned by him with godliness that their children, five hundred years after, were recorded by the Spirit of God to be the most eminent in their time for religion, Ezra ii. 58. Solomon being a godly governor of his family, did good after he was dead at so great a distance. Theodosius being asked how a private person might be a public good, answered, By ordering all things well at home. The way to make our orchards good is to look well to our nurseries.

It concerneth thee, therefore, reader, nearly, to exalt godliness in thy house as well as in thy heart; nay, I will be bold to tell thee, if there be in thee the truth of religion, thou wilt propagate it amongst thy relations. Thou wilt not be like the whirlpool, to suck all into thyself, but be diffusive for the good of others. A good Christian is like a needle touched with the loadstone, which being drawn itself, will draw others along with it. When Christ had drawn Philip, he presently draweth Nathanael, John i. 43, 45. The bird hath no sooner found a heap of corn but she chirpeth and calleth her fellows, and will be sure to carry some home to her nest. A saint should endeavour the conversion of his neighbours,

that they may eat of the bread of life with him; but he should have a special regard to his own family, that all in it may feed on Christ by faith, and live. Nature hath taught the beavers to help one another in swimming; and the cranes flying over the mountain Taurus, when the foremost is weary in beating the air, that the next should succeed, and so in order every one to labour for the safety of them all. Christians are taught from other creatures to be helpful one to another; but the master of the family, like the sun, must outshine all in respect of public influence.

Plutarch saith of the neighbour villages about Rome in Numa's time, that sucking in the air of that city they breathed righteousness. The family ought to be a wholesome air for others to breathe in. It is reported of Andronicus[1] the elder, that he was master of such a family as was the shop of virtue, and therefore it was called τῆς γῆς ἥλιος, The sun of the earth. Tremellius,[2] who for a time sojourned in Bishop Cranmer's family, telleth us that it was *Schola vel palæstra pietatis et literarum,* The school or nursery of piety and learning. The houses of the primitive Christians were little churches in regard of the worship and service of God: 'To the church that is in thine house,' Philem. 2; Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 9; Col. iv. 15. Though many a man's house is so far from being God's church and temple, that it is the devil's sty and kennel, that God may say to the master of the family, as in Rev. ii. 13, 'I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is.' Nay, though they are civil abroad, then they will have some rags to cover their nakedness and naughtiness, they are sordid at home, and discover there all their nastiness. David, on the contrary, whatever steps he might take awry, and whatsoever slips he might meet with in his public walking, would be sure to look to his feet in his private dwelling: 'I will walk in the midst of my house with a perfect heart until thou come unto me,' Ps. ci. 2. David was no hypocrite; he did not put on his best clothes when he went out, and put them off when he came in; but purity was his livery, as abroad, so at home.

Imitate that pious governor, who, though he had the burden of all the Israelites' civil and military affairs lying upon his shoulders, yet could say, 'I and my house will serve the Lord.'

Reader, I shall offer two thoughts to quicken thee to this necessary duty, and then give thee directions for the management of it.

1. Consider that religion in a family is the way to procure God's blessing on thy family. The holy family alone is the happy family. The Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom for the ark's sake, 2 Sam.

[1] Niceph. [2] Enar. in Hos. Præl.

vi. 11. If the ark be in the house, that is, religion, God is there; for the ark was a type of God's presence; and canst thou need any comforts when thou hast God's company?

The philosopher could say, Though he had few goods in his house, yet he had the gods in his house. Though thou hast a poor dwelling, yet if godliness be there, thou shalt have God's blessing. 'His presence will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous,' Job viii. 6. Thou mayest say of thy house, as Jacob of Bethel, 'The Lord is in this place; this is none other but the house of God.' Basil speaketh, that in some countries they draw other pigeons to their dove-houses by anointing one of their pigeon's wings with sweet ointment. If thy house be anointed with the oil of godliness, it will allure the blessed God to it; and then what evil needest thou fear, or what good canst thou want? It is observed of the Palladium in Troy, that whilst that remained amongst them their city was safe. The only way to have a destroying angel pass by thy house is to have the door-posts sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ. 'Through wisdom is a house builded, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all pleasant and precious riches,' Prov. xxiv. 3, 4. Here is true wealth, and the right way to enjoy it. 1. The true wealth: thy chambers shall be filled with all pleasant and precious riches. Righteousness is the best way to riches. 2. The way to this: by wisdom a house is builded, and it is established by understanding. By wisdom and understanding godliness is understood; and unto man he said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding,' Job xxviii. 28. This wisdom is the best foundation for any house to stand upon. When religion layeth the foundation, raiseth the walls, and covereth the roof, such a house is built upon a rock, and will stand against all the winds and waves, wrath and rage of men and devils. Some families had lasted longer, saith Luther, if they had been holier.

Religion will bring a blessing on thy estate, Job i. 10. 'Blessed is he that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments; for thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands; happy shalt thou be; and it shall be well with thee,' Ps. cxxviii. 1, 2. It will bring a blessing on thy children; God will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee, Gen. xvii. 7; Prov. xx. 7. The branches will fare the better for the sap of grace which is in the root. It will bring a blessing on thy name, Prov. x. 7. Holiness will make thy house truly honourable; it will bring a blessing on all thine affairs. In a word, that day in which religion is set up in thy

house, I may say to thee, as Christ to Zaccheus, 'This day salvation is come to thy house.'

2. Consider, a family without religion is a cursed family. That house which is not Bethel, a house of God, but Bethaven, a house of vanity, is Bethany, a house of sorrow and misery. 'The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked,' Prov. iii. 33. Whatsoever cordials or comforts, dishes or dainties are there, the curse of God, like the wild gourd which the sons of the prophets put into their pottage, will spoil and poison all. As a little leaven, a little of this curse of God will sour the whole lump of thy family blessings. 'I have seen the foolish taking root, but suddenly I cursed his habitation,' Job v. 3. The words are not a malediction from Eliphaz's private spirit, but a prediction from God's Spirit, as if he had said—I was neither malicious against his person, nor envious at his prosperous condition, but by the help of the Holy Ghost I foresaw his destruction; that though his house was built high, yet his unholiness would lay it low. Thou mayest possibly presume, that though thou livest without God, yet thou art beyond the reach of his rod; thou canst moat thy house round against the fire of divine fury, but thy confidence shall be rooted out of thy tabernacle, and brimstone shall be scattered on thy habitation. God will unkennel all such foxes, and drag them to their deserved destruction. When Dioclesian the persecutor retired from the empire to a private life, after he had feathered his nest, fire rained down from heaven and consumed his house.[1] When Nicephorus Phocas had built a mighty wall about his palace for his defence, he heard a voice in the night saying, Though thou buildest thy walls as high as heaven, sin is within, and that will pluck it down. The leprous house must be pulled down. God will have every brick, stone, tile, and piece of timber down. 'Where is the house of the prince? and where is the dwelling-place of the wicked?' Job xxi. 28.

Atheism in thy house will bring a curse upon thy calling, Job v. 2, 3. The works of thy hands will fare the worse for the wickedness of thy heart. On thy children—it is ill to be related to a traitor—diseases, and so destruction, may be hereditary. Children may inherit both their parents' riches and ruin, Job v. 4, 5; Isa. xiv. 20. His seed are far from safety—they are crushed. When a wicked man pulls down his house upon his head, many in it perish with him; as when Samson pulled the house down upon the Philistines.

The curse of God will be a moth in thy wardrobe, murrain among thy cattle, mildew in thy field, the plague to thy body,

[1] Euseb. lib. v. De Vit. Constant.

wrath to thy soul, will indeed make thy house a very hell upon earth. The highest family in the world without godliness, though never so rich and ruffling, is but like Golgotha, a place full of frightful skulls, and like a churchyard full of carcases, gilded, rotten, and golden damnation.

I shall now lay down some directions how thou mayest exercise thyself to godliness as the governor of a family.

First, Be careful whom thou admittest into thy family. Art thou unmarried, and to choose a husband or wife? Do thy occasions call for a man-servant or maid-servant? Be careful where thou fixest; for, believe it, not only thy grace will appear in a good choice, but also godliness will be much hindered or furthered by thy choice. 'One sinner destroyeth much good,' Eccles. ix. 18. One man may pull down that house, which many, with much care, cost, and pains, did set up. We read that wicked men have been the better for taking godly men into their families, as Laban and Potiphar; but we never read that godly men were ever the better for having wicked persons in their families; nay, how much have they been the worse, and by such been brought to great wickedness! As black corn, they smut and sully the good corn; as rusty armour, they injure that which is bright by being near it. The Lacedemonians were so sensible of this, that they would not suffer a stranger to abide among them above three days, lest by his evil example he should corrupt others. And wilt thou, friend, take them into thy house to dwell with thee, that will bring the plague along with them, and thereby probably destroy the bodies and souls of others? Canst thou think it safe, for a little worldly advantage, to be nigh them who are under God's fury, and next door to eternal fire? Shall thy house be as Noah's ark, abounding in creatures clean and unclean, when God commandeth thee to worship him uprightly, with thy whole family? I hope, Christian, better things of thee. It was written over Plato's door, *οὐ γεωμετρης, μή τίς εἰσίτω,* There is no man may come hither who is not a geometer. Let it be written over thy door, None may expect to dwell here who will not make religion his business.

Magnus, a Roman orator, complaineth of St Jerome, that he brought many uncircumcised Greeks into the temple, and defiled *candorem ecclesiæ sordibus ethnicorum*,[1] the unstained chastity of the church, with the impure sentences of heathen authors. Take heed that thou dost not defile the church of God, for such thy house should be, with heathen themselves in Christian habits.

[1] Jerom. Epist., tom. ii.

If thou wantest a wife, consider before thou choosest: take heed whom thou takest into thy bed, into thy bosom, lest thou meetest with a yoke-fellow that will draw as strongly towards hell as thou dost towards heaven. It is rendered as the reason why one of the kings of Israel was so wicked, because he had to wife the daughter of Ahab. There is little work to be done when the second horse in the team is always drawing back. The devil can make use of Eve to draw thee to undo thyself and posterity. He can make use of the rib, saith the father—alluding to that part of man out of which the woman was taken—to break thy head. The heathen tell us that every man when he marrieth, bringeth a good or an evil spirit into his house, and thereby makes his house either a heaven or a hell.

Be sure that wickedness do not woo for thee: do not send the unclean spirits, either of lust, or covetousness, or pride, to make the match. When men do as those sons of God, who saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them wives of them, Gen. vi. 1, hand over head, it is no wonder that they are married and marred together. Consider, a wife or a husband is the greatest outward comfort or cross in this world; and let prayer be the messenger thou employest about it. 'A good wife is from the Lord,' Prov. xix. 14. It is God's special gift, and therefore do thou go to him for it. Peter Martyr saith, that Adam, in that deep sleep in which God formed Eve out of him, was then praying for a meet help. And Isaac went forth to pray, when he had sent forth for a wife. He had need to have good counsel who is to take one to be his constant companion. When Joshua entered into a league with the Gibeonites, and never asked counsel of God, how sad were the effects of it! If thou enterest into a league with a man or a maid, for I know not what sex thou art of, and dost not ask counsel of God, expect a sad consequence of such rashness. Why shouldst thou, as our proverb is, for a little land take a fool by the hand—sell the comfort of thy life for a little perishing wealth, and make thy whole time on earth bitter, out of a love to a little fading treasure?

It was the advice of the late Earl of Salisbury, in his book of precepts to his son, that he should be exceeding careful whom he matched with, because, as in a project of war, when an army is foiled by the enemy, they seldom recover; so to err once in the choice of a wife, is usually to be undone for ever; and the more cause there is of special care, because he that seeketh out for a wife goeth to a lottery, where he shall meet with a hundred blanks for one prize.

But I am persuading thee to circumspection in this particular

not upon a politic, but a conscientious principle, as thou wouldst exalt religion in thy habitation. Next to thyself, thy wife will be the best friend or worst foe that godliness can have in thy family. Nay, possibly, and probably too, if thy wife should be wicked, though thou art at present like a sound apple, thou mayest quickly be specked, by lying near one that is all over rotten: the nearer the relation, the easier and speedier is the infection. He that could overcome a lion to his glory, was himself overcome by a woman to his sin and shame. The most perfect man, Adam, the strongest man, Samson; the wisest man, Solomon, were all betrayed by their wives into the hands of their spiritual enemies. The meekest man, Moses, hearkened so much to his wife, that it was like to have cost him his life. Some expositors give this reason why Satan spared Job's wife, when he slew his children, not to comfort him—surely the devil did not love Job so well—but to cross him, by provoking him to curse God: the devil knew that none was so fit to present that poisonous potion with success to Job, as his wife; that if he ever took it, her fair hands must give it, and her sugared words sweeten it. Solomon saith, 'Woe be to him that is alone;' surely it is also true, Woe be to him who is not alone, but hath a wicked wife like a snake in his bosom.

Reader, dost thou want a servant? Choose for God, not for thyself. Let not thy main query be, whether he can do thy work, but whether he will submit to God's word; though the former must not be neglected, yet the latter must be preferred. It may be for advantage sake thou receivest a drunken or swearing person into thy house; but dost thou consider that he will be an Achan, a troubler of thy family? Canst thou think to do God's work with the devil's tools? Put off thy disguise of Christianity if thou esteemest thy particular calling above thy general. Besides, dost thou know what thou hast done? Thou hast taken into thy house an usher to instruct thy children in the black art of hell; believe it, thy children will catch sins as soon as vermin from those that are of Satan's ragged regiment. Thy sons and daughters are like Polypus in Ælian, that turneth to the colour of that rock or weed in the sea which lieth nearest. Once more, thou wilt be frustrated in the end of thy entertaining such a servant, for they will never be faithful to their master who are unfaithful to their Maker. Constantius, the father of famous Constantine, gave out that all such as would not deny the faith should be deprived of their honour and offices; whereupon several forsook the faith, others stuck close to the truth. Whereupon the emperor, when he had

discovered those halting hypocritical persons, turned them all out of their places, saying, that they who were false to God would never be faithful to man. I do a little question his policy in the premises, but his piety in the conclusion is out of question; for they who will rob God of his glory, will, if opportunity serve, rob men of their goods and good name too. It is recorded to the credit of Queen Elizabeth that she would suffer no lady to approach her presence of whose dishonesty she had the least suspicion. Friend, mark and follow the man after God's own heart: 'Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight,' Ps. ci. 6, 7.

As thou wouldst have God's company in thy family, do not entertain his enemies into thy family. 'What communion hath God with Belial?' As thou wouldst make religion thy business, avoid those quench-coals, those hinderers of holiness. Bid the workers of iniquity depart, if thou wouldst keep the commandments of thy God, Ps. cxix. 115.

Secondly, Mind holy performances in thy family. Every master of a family is a priest, and his whole family should be a royal priesthood, offering at least morning and evening sacrifice to God, acceptable through Jesus Christ. The Jews had sacrifice in their families, as well as in the tabernacle, Exod. xii. 2. 'Let me go, I pray thee, for our family hath a sacrifice in the city,' saith David to Jonathan, 1 Sam. vi. 20.

It was prophesied that in the days of the gospel the Spirit should be poured down upon men, and they should see Christ, and mourn 'every family apart,' Zech. ii. 10. It was the advice of Jerome to a pious matron, So take care of thine house, as alway to allow liberty and time to thy soul.[1] The governor hath the cure of the souls as well as of the bodies in his family; and if he mind their outward man and neglecteth their inward, he is but a brute in human shape, for beasts feed the bodies of their young.

As the school fitteth young men for the university, so holy performances in private prepare servants and children for, and help them to profit by, the ordinances of God in public. A foundation well laid by the master of a family is a great help to the minister when he goeth to rear and raise the building. Confident I am our work would not have half that difficulty which now it hath, if

[1] Ita habeto solicitudinem domus, ut aliquam tamen vacationem animæ tribuas.—*Hier. ad Celant.*

masters of families would but do their duties. He that findeth his timber ready hewn to his hand hath a great advantage in setting up a house of him that must fell, bark, season, and hew it himself. It is no wonder that an apprentice is so backward to his work and so bungling at it, when he is wholly unacquainted with it and a stranger to it. If children and servants were accustomed to religious exercises at home, sermons would not be so tedious nor Sabbaths so tiresome to them as they are.

The ordinary duties in families are prayer, reading the word, with instructing children and servants out of it, and singing.

1. Prayer must be in families. It is said of Bishop Usher[1] that he had family prayer four times a day, at six in the morning and eight at night, and before dinner and supper in his chapel. 'David returned to bless his house,' 2 Sam. vi. 21—that is, say expositors, to bless God with his family, and to beg God's blessing on his family. Esther prayed and fasted with her maidens, Esth. iv. 16. The Holy Ghost enjoineth husband and wife 'to dwell together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered,' 1 Pet. iii. 7. Our blessed Saviour is to be our pattern. Now he prayed with his family of disciples: 'And it came to pass as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him,' Luke ix. 18. He was alone, not secretly, to exclude all society; but privately, to include only his own family. Our houses are God's houses, and in God's house there must every day be morning and evening sacrifice. 'I will that men pray everywhere;' surely then in private as well as in secret and in public, 1 Tim. ii. 8. Families need direction in the day and protection in the night, and truly either of them is worth a prayer. Thy family sins must be pardoned, thy family wants must be supplied, and if they do not deserve a prayer they deserve nothing. Horses kneel before they lie down at night, and when they rise up in the morning; and shall thy house be worse than a stable of beasts?

They that will not beg family supplies and bless God for family mercies, may well be branded for ungodly and ungrateful wretches. Prayer and praise are like the double motion of the lungs; what we suck in by petition we breathe out in thanksgiving, and without this, religion cannot live in a family. What dangers are thy family liable to every day! and without prayer thou hast no guide, no guard. Origen, going once to comfort a martyr, was himself apprehended, and constrained either to have his body abused by a blackamoor, or to offer to the idol, which latter he did; but bewail-

[1] Dr Bernard in his Life and Death.

ing it, saith, I went out that morning without prayer, which I know was the cause of that evil.

It is said of the Egyptians that there was a great cry at midnight, for in every house there was one dead. Reader, are there not dead souls in thy family, children and servants dead in sins and trespasses? and shall there be no cry, no complaining to God there? I must tell thee thy house is worse than a pest-house, for thou hast infected and dangerously diseased souls in it, and not so much as 'Lord have mercy upon us' written on thy door. Heathens and families without prayer are fitly joined together, Jer. x. 25. The truth is, such persons are English in their language, but Indian in their atheistical carriage; they feed and clothe their bodies like Englishmen, but they starve and go naked in their souls like Indians. Only herein they differ, that they cannot be prayerless in their houses at so cheap a rate, but must expect a hotter hell, because they sin against a clearer light. Many families are the picture of hell: one may hear twenty oaths for one prayer; the master will often curse, but seldom or never bless his family; he loveth cursing, so it will come to him; and as he delighted not in blessing, so it will be far from him.

Do not say thou canst not pray. Had the Father of spirits ever any dumb children? Every beggar at thy door who is pinched with hunger, will tell thee that sense of misery will teach thee to be earnest for mercy. If thou wert condemned to be hanged, thou wouldst not want words to plead for a pardon. Surely eternal death, to which thou art liable, is far more lamentable; and if ever God make thee sensible of it, which must be done, or thou art lost for ever, thou wilt quickly follow him with prayers and tears for grace and life.

Thy affections in prayer, if right, will abundantly make up thy want of expressions. A sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue. Though thou hast not the gift of prayer, yet if thou canst act grace in prayer, all will be well.

Pray much in secret, and thou wilt quickly learn to pray well in private. Use at any trade will make men prompt and perfect.

Rather use a form out of a book than omit the duty. They who cannot dress their meat themselves, must be beholden to their neighbours to do it for them. Set upon it presently; it is thy honour, thy privilege; and use crutches till thou art able to go alone; only do not content thyself with them, (alas, who ever was proud of stilts!) but labour to gain knowledge in spiritual things,

by reading, secret praying, and conference, that thou mayest throw them away.

2. The word of God must be read in thy family, and thy household instructed there. As by prayer thy duty is to acquaint God with thy family wants, so by reading some portion of Scripture daily, thy duty is to acquaint thy family with God's will. A house without light is in a dreadful lamentable condition; thy household, without the word, sit in darkness, and thereby in the shadow of death. The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, Prov. vi. 23. Alas, how can thy servants or children do their heavenly Master's and Father's work, when they are wholly ignorant of his will? The weeds of sin grow of themselves; but the ground must be ploughed, and sown, and harrowed, and watered, before good corn will spring up.

God expecteth that thou shouldst be both a priest to offer up sacrifice for, and a prophet to instruct and teach thy family. A good housekeeper is like that nobleman, who had for his impress two bundles of ripe millet, with this motto, *Servare et servari meum est;* for the nature of millet is, say some, to guard itself from corruption, and that which lieth nearest to it. The word of God, and holy instructions to a family, are as salt, which is helpful against putrefaction: Mat. v., 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' Masters must be sure to have salt in themselves, and for their families. It is said that the Hammanients in Cyrene made their houses of salt, hewn out of their hills in manner of stone. Jerome counselled Leta, Let thy children daily give thee some account of some choice flowers gathered out of the Bible. Teach thy children to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. It is too late to season flesh when it crawleth with worms; do it therefore betimes. Bishop Rider read and expounded Psalm ci., which treateth of the good government of families, often to his household, and hired them with money to learn it.

Abraham had letters testimonial from heaven of his sincerity, and the favour to be trusted with *arcana imperii*, God's secrets, because of his faithfulness in this particular: 'And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham the things which I do? For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord,' Gen. xviii. 17, 19. Oh, how few Abrahams are there in England! Many teach their families the works of the devil, but few teach them the way of the Lord; many lop their trees, prune their plants, break their horses, train their hawks, yea, teach their dogs, yet never instruct their children.

Friend, consider the worth of thy children and servants' souls, and the weight of their everlasting estates, and how in the dark of ignorance they must unavoidably stumble into hell; and for the Lord's sake be persuaded to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, John xvii. 3. Naturalists tell us that bees carry small gravel in their feet to poise their bodies as they fly through stormy winds. If thou wouldst not have thy little ones blown away with the winds of temptation, do thou labour to poise them with the principles of the oracles of God. Ah, what pity is it that men, like silly doves without hearts, should sit in their dove-cots, see their nests destroyed, and their young ones killed before their eyes, by the old manslayer the devil, and never stir or offer once to rescue or revenge them! Good Lord, what unnaturalness is in many parents and masters! Cardan speaks of one that had a receipt for the certain dissolving the stone in the bladder, and I question not, saith he, but he is damned for not discovering it before his death. Thou knowest the word, under God, must cure the persons in thy family of the stone in the heart; and wilt thou neglect to acquaint them with it, but suffer them to die eternally? O reader, be not guilty of such horrid and barbarous cruelty. Do as that holy bishop of Armagh, who one day in every week did catechise his family. It is reported of Louis IX. of France, that he was found instructing a poor kitchen boy, and being asked the reason, answered piously, I know the meanest in my family hath a soul as precious as my own, and bought with the blood of Jesus Christ. Our Saviour taught his disciples often in private as their governor, and according to their capacities, Mark iv. 33; Mat. xvi. 17, 18. It is an honour to the highest prince to teach his household God's precepts. Oh let thy words in thy family, as the waters of Nilus, often overflow to make others fruitful. The papists confess that all the ground which we have got of them is by catechising and instructing our youth.

3. Singing of psalms must be used in thy family. The Lord Jesus and his family did practise this duty: Mat. xxvi. 30, 'And when they sang a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.' David in that psalm, at the dedication of his house, speaketh that his glory should sing praise to God, and not be silent, Ps. xxx. title, ver. 4 and 12. Our tongues are called our glory, not only because by our speech we excel beasts, but chiefly because therewith we should glorify God. It is observable that most of those places which prophesy the Gentiles' conversion, do mention their

worshipping the true God by singing, Ps. cviii. 3, c., and lxiv. 4; Isa. liv. 1, and lii. 8. The Holy Ghost when he commandeth that the word should keep house with us, doth also enjoin us to 'teach and admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,' (which are the titles of David's psalms, and the known division of them, expressly answering to the Hebrew words, *Shurim*, *Telhillim*, and *Mizinurim*, by which his psalms are distinguished and entitled, as the learned observe,) 'singing and making melody with grace in our hearts to the Lord,' Col. iii. 16; Eph. v. 19; James v. 13. Basil[1] speaks high in the praise of praising God by this holy exercise. Chrysostom speaketh of some in his time who always concluded their suppers with singing a psalm, and, saith he, they lived like angels.

This ordinance will much quicken holy affections, and help a Christian to serve God with more cheerfulness. When the Israelites were singing the 136th psalm at the bringing in the ark, the glory of the Lord filled the house, 2 Chron. xx. 22. The sweet singer in Israel was the man after God's own heart.

Only, reader, be careful to sing David's psalms with David's spirit, and not like a nightingale to sing by rote: 'I will sing with my spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.' Making melody with grace in the heart, is the best tune to set all David's psalms with.

Thirdly, Set a good pattern to thy family. The fore-horse in the team had need to go right, because all the rest follow in the same road. If the commander be treacherous, how soon may he betray his soldiers, who follow him at the heels, into the enemy's hands!

A governor of a family must, like Moses, be mighty both in word and deed. Patterns are very prevalent both to good and evil. Precepts teach, but examples draw. 'Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?' Gal. ii. 14. Peter did not compel them by his preaching, but by his pattern. His example was so powerful, that even Barnabas, as well as others, was drawn away therewith. It is observable that Jeroboam seldom appeareth in the heaven of Scripture, but in the form of a blazing star, with a tail after him, 'Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin;' by his precepts he commanded them to sin, but by his pattern he compelled them to sin. As examples are attractive to evil, so also to good. 'That if any believe not, they may be won without the word by conversation of the wife,' 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. If godliness be written

[1] Basil. de virt. et laud., Ps. tom. 1.

in the book of thy life, in a fair character, in a large lovely letter, it may invite thy children and servants to read and like it, who otherwise possibly would not have taken the least notice of it.

He that ruleth others, must not be unruly himself. If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked, Prov. xxix. 12. If a governor of a family, a father or mother, be a drunkard, a swearer, or an atheist, their children will quickly imitate them; they will as certainly inherit their lusts, as their lands. As some parents make their children rich by their lordships, so they make them riotous by their evil lives. Observe, Abraham, a good man, denieth his wife; Isaac is his heir not only in his wealth, but also in that weakness; Isaac denieth his wife likewise, Gen. xx. 2, with Gen. xxvi. 7. Jacob's wives got little good by the pattern and practice of Laban their father, Gen. xxxi. 19, and xxxv. 1, 2.

The parents of the children destroyed by the two she-bears, were wont to jeer Elisha in their ordinary talk. What! Elisha the bald-pate must be taken up to heaven, forsooth, as well as Elias! The children hearing it spoken by them, learned it of them, though they paid dear for their learning, for it cost them their lives, and, for aught I know, their souls, 2 Kings ii. 24. O reader! doth not thine heart ache to read this, and hast thou not abundant cause to be heedful, lest by thy pattern thou shouldst draw thy children to sin and to hell? The idolatrous Israelites drew their children to join with them in the worship of the false gods, Ezek. xviii. 2.

Plutarch[1] observeth of Cato that he was very wary not to speak an uncomely word in the presence of his children. This heathen will condemn many Christians, who will curse and swear, and drink and roar, and that in presence of their children. Reader, avoid sin, both for thine own and others' sake. As a stone thrown into the water makes but one circle at first, but that one begetteth many; so though the sin in thee at first be but one, yet it may cause many both in thy children and servants. The sin of a master or mistress is like an infectious air, which others breathing in are infected by it. Thy servants will as readily put on thy lusts as thy livery, and thy children will be proud of such a patronage, such a cloak for their villany. A dark eye benights the whole body. Weigh all thy words and all thy works, considering how many followers thou hast; he that sinneth once, sinneth twice if he sin before others.

Be serious and diligent about the concernments of God and thy soul, that others may take example by thee. The biggest stars are brightest, and give light to those that are of a lesser magnitude.

[1] Plut. in Vit. Cat.

Thou who art the greatest shouldst be the most gracious in the family; if the sun shine not on the mountains, it must needs be set in the valleys. If thy children and servants behold thee careful of thy language, and conscientious in thy carriage, when they see thee humble, fervent, constant, and serious in holy duties, they may learn by thee and write after thee; such a pattern may tend exceedingly to thy spiritual profit.

It is observed of Cæsar by Cicero, that he would never say to his soldiers *Ite, sed Venite*, Go ye, but Come ye, marching before them himself, and giving them a pattern. Do thou, reader, go before thy family in sobriety and sanctity, as their faithful captain, and they may sooner than thou expectest follow after thee.

Naturalists tell us of the mulberry-tree, that there is nothing in it but what is medicinal in some sort or other; the fruit, the root, the bark, the leaf, all are useful. Truly, so it ought to be with thee. All thy expressions, all thy actions, should be instructions to thy inferiors. Thy behaviour in private, in public towards God, towards thy wife, towards thy children, towards thy servants, towards thy neighbours, should all be lectures to teach others religion and righteousness; that you may be able to say to your children, as Seneca to his sister, Though I can leave you no great portion, yet I leave you a good pattern.

Besides, one work required of thee, as I shall shew thee before the conclusion of this chapter, is to admonish and reprove others in thy family for their faults; which with what face canst thou do, or with what hope of success, unless thou art free thyself? It was a shame to Plutarch that his servant should say, My master writeth falsely; he saith it is unbeseeming a philosopher to be angry, *et ipse mihi irascitur*, and he himself is angry with me. If thou reprovest thy child for not praying, and thy servant for drunkenness, and art guilty thyself, though thou acquaintest them never so much with the wrath of God, which will certainly seize upon atheists and drunkards, they will never believe thee; for they know thou dost not believe thyself. Thy words would seem to draw the nail of sin out, but thy works are such a heavy hammer, that they drive it in to the very head. When the rude soldiers saw the Roman senators sit gravely, and discourse soberly, they took them for gods, and were awful of them; but when they perceived one of them to grow waspish, they took them for men, and spoiled them. Herod feared John's reproof, knowing that he was a just man, Mark vi. 20. Where there is piety in the person, there is majesty and authority in the reprehension; 'Let the righteous smite me,' Ps. cxli. 5. Th

snuffers of the sanctuary were of pure gold. He that would reprove others' dimness, and make them shine brightly with the light of holiness, had need to be irreprovable himself.

Reader, walk unspottedly, otherwise when thou threatenest thy children or servants with the judgments of God against sin, thou dost, like David, pass a sentence of death and condemnation against thy own soul.

Fourthly, Be careful and diligent that thy whole family may sanctify the Lord's-day. When the Israelites were to sacrifice to God in the wilderness, they went with their little ones, and all their households, Exod. xii. When Elkanah went up to sacrifice to the Lord, all his house went with him, 1 Sam. i. 21. Thy duty is, according to these examples, to see that all thy family, unless necessity should hinder, serve the Lord in public. Do not suffer any of thine to be playing idly in the churchyard, when they should be praying earnestly in the church; nor to be talking vainly of the world, when they should be hearkening reverently to the word. Oh, what pity is it that they should be sucking poison, when they should be sucking milk out of the breasts of consolation! The fourth commandment doth fully speak thy duty, not only to be careful that they forbear thy work, but also that they mind God's worship. Thou knowest not but that thy child or servant, by missing one season, may miss of salvation. Possibly they are wrought hard in the week-days, and have very little time for their souls, so that their only time of improving their spiritual stock, by trading towards heaven, is on a Sabbath-day. Or it may be they are careless of their main work, of providing for the other world, all the week, that if thou shouldst neglect them on the Lord's-day, they will be left under a necessity of perishing: surely they who have but one good meal in seven days, and are robbed of that, are unconceivably wronged. When David came to his brethren to the camp, Eliab said to him, 'How comest thou down hither? Where is the flock? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart,' 1 Sam. xvii. 28. Give not God cause to greet thee thus at church, How camest thou hither? Where is thy flock, thy family? With whom hast thou left those few sheep, thy children, and thy servants? I know thy pride, they are not good enough to come along with thee, to be minded by thee: or, I know thy covetousness, thou hast employed them about thy earthly business; or, I know thy carelessness and soul-cruelty, thou carest not what becometh of them, whether they be saved or damned for ever. I tell thee, friend, some gentlemen by

going abroad alone without their servants, have lost their silver; and for aught I know, by thy going to church without thy company, thou mayest lose the blessing and efficacy of the ordinances. How canst thou expect that God should have any care of thy soul, when thou tramplest the precious souls of others under thy feet, which he hath given thee special charge of?

O reader, think of it. Are not thy children and servants strangers to God, and alienated from his life, through the ignorance that is in them? And is not the ministry of the word appointed to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God? How shall they be converted if the ordinances of God be neglected? Though a person be dangerously diseased, if he observe his purging days, according to the advice of his able physician, there may be hopes of recovery; but if he neglect the means, if he perish, it will be no marvel. If thy children and servants are holy, canst thou expect the fire of grace should continue or increase, whilst thou takest away the fuel? Dost thou think that spiritual life can be maintained without spiritual meat?

In private also be watchful over thy family, that all under thy charge be present at holy duties, as singing, praying, repetition of sermons, and the like. Thou art careful that in the week-days they do work diligently; and why shouldst thou not be as careful that they do God's work on his day? Is thy work of greater concernment than God's? or dost thou love thyself, the poor withering world I mean, above the blessed God?

Examine those who waited on the word of God in public, what good they have got, what lessons they have learned, from the great Master of assemblies. Our Saviour, after sermon, asked those of his family, 'Have ye understood all these sayings?' Mat. xiii. 5. Hereby thou wilt make them more attentive to public ordinances, and better their memories; as also, by this means, thou mayest quicken thy own affections.

Suffer none of thy house to spend any part of the day either in idleness, pastimes, or worldly business. Thou art accountable to God, as well for sins of permission as for sins of commission, and it will another day be imputed to thy charge, if the day be profaned by thy carelessness. If thou wouldst not suffer for others, do not suffer others in sin.

Fifthly, Let discipline be set up in thy family. When Jacob would dedicate his house to God, he commandeth all his family to change their garments, and put away their strange gods. Their change of garments did signify that change of heart and life which

he desired should be his household livery, Gen. xxxv. 1, 2. As the governor of a family must be a priest to pray, and a prophet to teach, so also a king to rule; to be a terror to evil-doers, and an encouragement to them that do well in his family: 'Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle,' Job xi. 14. Zophar meaneth not a natural or personal, (though so the word is sometimes taken, as 2 Cor. v. 1,) but a domestical and civil tabernacle. Though sin may come into thy house by children or servants' commission, yet it must not dwell there, but be cast out by severe reprehension. Wickedness is a bold guest, it will come uncalled, but it must be more bold than welcome; it must not dwell in thy tabernacle. It is said of Cato he would bear with faults anywhere rather than at home. Bishop Jewel at night called his servants to an account how they had spent the day, and, after prayer, admonished them accordingly.

Thy duty is to 'warn the unruly,' 1 Thes. v. 13, to acquaint them of sin, how near and dear soever to thee, with the dishonour they bring thereby to God, the disgrace to the gospel, and the disadvantage and destruction to their own souls. If the fault be the first, or of infirmity, or not so great a sin as to waste the conscience, and poison thy family by its pattern, let the medicine thou appliest for its cure be mild; earthen glasses must be tenderly washed, when iron vessels must be scoured with wisps. 'Of some have compassion, making a difference,' Jude 22. Who would, that is wise, give the same physic to an infant, which would purge a lusty grown person? 'For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about with the cummin: but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod,' Isa. xxviii. 27, 28.

If the crime be crimson and scandalous, or repeated, or justified, rebuke sharply; hard knots must have strong and sharp wedges: 'Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire,' Jude 23. In such a case weak physic will only stir, not remove the disease, and thereby leave the patient in a worse condition than it found him. Nettles touched gently sting the more; a prick with a rapier is more dangerous sometimes than a wound with a sword, because the latter wideneth the orifice, and thereby maketh the place more open to the plaster which should heal it. It is much better for them to be preserved in brine and pickle, than to rot in flesh-pleasing and fondness. Kindness, and bearing with such in thy family, is like the kiss of Judas to Christ, a betraying them; and like Joab's salutation to Abner, destroying and killing them.

Be sure, therefore, not to bear with any under thy charge in sin: 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.' He is a drone, unserviceable to his house, his hive, who hath lost this sting of reproof. Pious Asa would not suffer sin in his own mother, 'Asa removed his mother Maachah from being queen, because she made an idol in a grove; and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron,' 2 Chron. xv. 16. Patient Job would not suffer sin in his own wife, 'Thou speakest like a foolish woman,' chap. ii. 6. Plain-hearted Jacob would not suffer sin in his own children, 'Ye have troubled me, to make me stink among the inhabitants of the land.' 'Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel,' Gen. xxxiv. 30, and xlix. 7. David would not abide sin in a servant, Ps. ci. 7, nor Edward the Sixth in his own sister.

Let thy reproofs against sin be mingled with, and so managed that they may manifest, love to their souls. When the nail is dipt in grease it entereth without renting the board; when reprehension is dipt in, and tipt with love, it will probably enter the heart, without cutting it in pieces with rage and revenge. Prudence may do much towards the advancement of the offender's profit in this particular.

Though thy words should be soft, yet thine arguments should be hard against the sin committed. To this end let thy reproofs be as near as may be in Scripture phrases, that the offender may see it is not so much man as God, who rebuketh him for his fault. The word is a hammer; if well laid on, it will drive the nail of reproof to the head. If the oil of reprehension be gently and prudently bathed in by the hot fire of the word, it may abate very great swellings. But be sure to perform this duty. The magistrate who spareth a man-slayer is guilty of his second murder.[1] Plato seeing a child commit a fault, went and corrected his father. The master of a family who alloweth any in sin, is partaker of their sin. We perpetrate those sins which we may and do not prevent; we shall answer one day for sins of communion as well as for sins of commission. Oh, how miserable will thy condition be, when the provocations in thy family, which thou knowest of, and winkest at, shall all be charged upon thee! Naturalists tell us that if a serpent eat a serpent, it becomes a dragon; if thou to thy own sins add the sins of thy children and servants, what a monster in sin wilt thou be! Are not thy own sins heavy enough? Dost thou want more load upon thy precious soul to sink thee deeper into

[1] Spencer, 182, 576.

hell? 'Is not thy iniquity (already) great, and thy wickedness infinite?' as Eliphaz said to Job, Job xxii. 5. Great for the nature of thy sins, and infinite for their number; and wilt thou, like one that is pressing to death, cry and call for more weight?

Maintain thy power and authority in thy family; a wise grave carriage will sharpen the weapon of reproof, and make it pierce the deeper. Foolish familiarity blunteth the edge of it. He that would throw a stone forcibly to do execution, must stand at some distance.

Encourage small beginnings of good in any in thy family; shine with a lightsome countenance, cast a warm influence upon the blossoms of holiness; hereby thou mayest do much towards their ripening. David's eye of favour was upon the faithful, Ps. ci. 6. A governor of a family must, like a gardener, pluck up weeds, but cherish and tender the good flowers and plants.

Sixthly, Take care that all in thy family be well employed; not to permit idleness in thy house is one way to prevent ungodliness. There is employment suitable to every person in thy dwelling; servants should be diligent in the discharge of their duties. Job's servants were about their work when the Sabeans and Chaldeans fell upon them, and sent them into the other world, Job i. 14, 17. Jacob served his master Laban with all his might, Gen. xxxi. 6. Apelles painted a servant with hind's feet, to shew that he should be nimble in despatching any errand; with broad shoulders, signifying that he should contentedly bear hard usage; and with his hands full of tools, because he should be always at work. Children also, if at home, must be employed in their places; if young, in learning; if elder, in some calling. Solon,[1] the Athenian lawgiver, enacted that the son should not relieve his father in his old age who had brought him up idle, and without a trade. The patriarchs, though principal men in their generation, brought up all their children to some calling; their tender daughters were not exempted from household business. Rebekah, the mother of prophets and princes, was not ashamed of her pitcher, and drawing water therewith for her father's cattle.

Those dainty dames who plead her pattern for their ear-rings and bracelets, will hardly plead it for a pitcher and painfulness. Augustus Cæsar brought up his daughters in carding and spinning. Gentlemen, though they are not bound to bring up their children to low or mean callings, yet are bound to keep them out of the snare of idleness, and to take care that they be in some lawful business serviceable to themselves and others. The wife, as well

[1] Plut. in Vit.

as servants and children, ought to be industrious in her station. *Spinster* is a term given to the greatest women in our law. It is said of the good housewife, 'She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness,' Prov. xxxi. 13, 27. A woman's work consisteth in sewing, and doing somewhat herself, and overseeing others, as appeareth in the fore-quoted place, besides the charge of her children. Hereby a wise woman is said to build her house, Prov. xiv. 1. As a carpenter layeth the platform of a house in his head, and so studieth that none of his stuff be cut to waste, so a good housewife doth so overlook the affairs of her family, and so contrive and order things by a prudent provident forecast, that there may be no waste, but all things disposed for the best. Hence it is that, though the husband is called the guide of the wife, yet the wife is called the guide of the house, Prov. ii. 17, 1 Tim. v. 14; and for this end, they are commanded to be keepers at home, Titus ii. 5. They that gad much abroad, do their families at home but little good; such are according to the signification of the second wife of Lamech, *Zillahs*, the shadows of wives. The Grecians had a custom, when the new-married bride was brought home to her husband's house, to burn the axletree of the chariot or cart in which she was brought, before the door, to teach her that she must abide at home. But the main work lieth upon the governor of the family. 'Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flock, and look well to thy herds,' Prov. xxvii. 23. He that is far from his work, is not far from want. The Jews have a proverb: The master's foot makes his ground fat; which speaks thus much, that if the master be not forward with his own hands, all things will go backward in his house.[1] *Εἷς ἐστι δοῦλος, ὁ δεσπότης οἰκίας*, The master is the greatest servant in the house. It is said of Albanus, bishop of Scotland, that he was never idle, nor ever suffered any in his family to be so.[2]

Reader, this particular of overseeing, that all under thy roof mind their proper work, will be some help to godliness, and a great stop to wickedness. Iphicrates[3] would never let his soldiers be idle in their garrisons, but would set them to lop trees, or dig, or carry burdens, saying, that if they had nothing to do they would mutiny, or commit some villainy. The bird that sitteth still is a fit mark for the murderer of souls, when the flying bird is safe. As corrupt blood is the cause of all natural, so is idleness of all spiritual dis-

[1] Jo. Mantii, *Loc. Com.*

[2] Spotswood's History of the Church of Scotland.

[3] Polym. Stratag, lib. iii.

cases. When persons in a family neglect their task, then is their hour of temptation. Idleness is often the cause of drunkenness; they leave their work-house who run to the ale-house, Amos vi. 2. Uncleanness is the daughter of idleness; lust will easily creep in upon those who are lazy, as did appear sadly in Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 49: *Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus.* Hence fellow-servants commit uncleanness together. Idleness is the mother of unrighteousness: they who neglect their tasks turn thieves; they must not starve, they say, and will not work, therefore they must steal, 2 Thes. iii. 12. When servants are idle, many times they rob their masters. Tale-bearing also is one of the fruits that groweth upon this tree. When servants are idle, they run tattling from house to house, making difference amongst neighbours, 1 Tim. v. 13, Prov. xi. 23. Carping Momus was never found working. Truly, friend, thou canst not think the wrong thou doest thy family if thou suffer them, like millstones, to consume themselves thus for want of work. St Greenham,[1] as Bishop Hall calleth him, when a woman, tempted much by the devil, came to him for advice, gave her this direction, Never be idle, but be always well employed; for in my own experience I have found it, when the devil came to tempt me, I told him that I was not at leisure to hearken to his temptations, but was busy in my calling, and thereby resisted his assaults.

Seventhly, Maintain peace and love in thy family. Contentions will hinder religion; strife, like fire, is wholly opposite to the water of grace. As in times of warring the laws of men are silent in a state, *inter arma silent leges*, so in jarring families, the laws of God can be little heard. God was not in the tempestuous rough wind, nor in the fire, but in the still low voice, 1 Kings xix. 12. 'Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. If thy house be in a flame it is time for thy best friends to be gone. Thy house should be a lesser heaven, in it thy God must be worshipped and glorified; but in heaven there are no storms; tempests ascend no higher than the middle region. Where God is served with perfect purity, there is perfect peace. As in the ringing of bells, where every one keepeth its place, and time, and order, they make a harmonious sound, and delight the daughters of music; but when they jar and strike against each other, their noise is harsh and distasteful. The holy performances of families that live in love, are heaven's music; but brawlings in houses make prayers ungrateful, and have too much resemblance of the bellowings in hell. When the wind of contentions is high,

[1] Mr Greenham in his works.

the smoke of thy incense cannot ascend, it will be beaten down again. In stormy weather, one but a little way distant sometimes cannot hear his neighbour calling; storms of passions will hinder God's hearing thy petitions.

It is said that in Cimmeria there is no light: and truly it is more sad that in some families there is no love. The husband is against the wife, and the wife against the husband; master and servants, parents and children, are ever quarrelling. Seven devils could agree in one heart, nay, a legion, which is seven thousand six hundred and twenty-two, if Varro may be believed, in another; and yet seven persons cannot agree in one house. The language in it is usually like Billingsgate, and the carriage often like Bedlam; but the hand of the devil is in all this, who knoweth his best time to fish is when the waters are troubled. When there is a tempest raised in the spirits of men, we may quickly know that Satan was the conjurer to raise the high winds. He knoweth one way to take a house is by firing it.

Truly, Satan hath a mighty advantage against an idle and a brawling family: as the dog, he devoureth the sheep in pieces which he could not do whole. When Cyrus came near Babylon with his great army, and finding the river, by reason of its depth, unpassable, he divided it into many channels, whereby the main river sank so on a sudden, that his army went over and took the city. Thus, by division doth Satan conquer and surprise families.

There is mention made of a dispute betwixt Mars and Pallas,[1] which of them should have the honour to give the name to the city of Athens. At length it was resolved that he should give the name who could find out that which could most conduce to the benefit of the city. Hereupon Mars presented them with a stately horse, signifying wars and divisions; but Pallas came in with an olive branch, the emblem of peace. Upon which the city chose Pallas to be their guardian, as knowing that unity is the way to prosperity.

Godliness in a family ebbeth and floweth much, according to the wranglings or love in a family. As the *Lapis Tyrrhenus* Pliny[2] speaketh of, which, being entire, swimmeth; but broken, every part of it sinketh to the bottom. Truly, thy family may float above water while it is whole and undivided, but if it be in pieces, it will quickly sink.

But I must especially commend this duty to the governors of families, husbands and wives. Children are seldom so impudent,

[1] Jo. Bodin. Method. Hist., cap. vi.

[2] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii.

and servants may either be made quiet within, or be turned out of doors; but if the chief strings jar, all the melody is marred. Observe how the Holy Ghost giveth this particular precept in order to the promotion of piety in a family. The wife must be of a 'meek and quiet spirit,' and the husband must 'give honour to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, as heirs together of the grace of life, that prayers be not hindered,' 1 Pet. iii. 4, 7. We may consider the injunction, and the reason of it. The injunction is first to wives; they must be of meek and quiet spirits; quiet, not quarrelsome; meek, not murmuring through peevishness, or mad with passion. 'A contentious wife is a continual dropping,' saith Solomon, Prov. xix. 13. The man would stay at home, but her tongue, like rain dropping through the roof upon his head wherever he sitteth down, drives him out of his house. Where is godliness in the meantime? The wise man saith again, 'It is better to dwell in the wilderness, (amongst venomous creatures,) than with such a wife,' Prov. xxi. 13. When she should be praying, she is, like a mad dog, barking or biting. Such a wife, saith Lycophron, is but a cold armful. This made Sylla say, I had been blessed if I had continued a bachelor. Upon this ground, I suppose, Julian the apostate (whose mouth was often black with blasphemies) said, that Moses, instead of meet help, might have written meet hinderer. But certainly whatsoever some men's perverseness may drivel and utter, or some women's peevishness occasion, a woman, if of a godly and quiet spirit, is the greatest comfort on earth, and a great help she may be to her husband in his journey to heaven. The injunction is, secondly, to the husband. He must 'honour his wife as the weaker vessel, as his fellow-heir of the grace of life.' He must honour her, not be bitter to her. He must give her his greatest love, not deny her a good look. Some husbands are so currish and crabbed, they are always raging and fretting at their wives, nay, like those that are distracted, they sometimes beat and tear their wives themselves, 'for they two are one flesh.' How far are such from obedience to God's law! Let the husband 'honour the wife as the weaker vessel'—that is, use her tenderly. China dishes and Venice glasses must be tenderly handled, because they are weak vessels. The husband must, with the mantle of love, cover many infirmities. A heathen could tell Sarah, that 'Abraham was a covering of the eyes to her,' Gen. xx. 16. The eye is the tenderest part of the body. God hath provided a special cover to fence it. When God would speak his infinite respect to, and care of, his people, he saith, 'They are as dear to him as the apple of his eye.' Truly, husbands ought to be as tender of

their wives as of the apple of their eyes. But, reader, see the reason of this injunction of love to husbands and wives, 'that your prayers be not hindered.' As if he had said, Wind up those weights of meekness and love, or religion will stand still. Take away those needful props, and piety will fall to the ground. O friend, as thou hast any love to the honour of God, honour thy wife as the weaker vessel, if God hath called thee to that relation. If thou art a wife, be of a meek and quiet spirit. If there be not concord in affections, there will be sad discord in petitions. When there is war in a kingdom, how are Sabbaths profaned, ordinances despised, prayer and Scripture neglected! Men are hurried away in haste to this and that place, and leave duties behind them. So, in a family, which is a kingdom in a little volume, divisions will put religion behind, and force it to stand back. Rubenius Celer would needs have it engraven on his tomb, that he had lived with his wife Ennea forty-three years and eight months, and yet they never fell out.

It is happy where the husband and wife are like the two branches in the prophet Ezekiel's hand, so closed together in one bark that both made but one piece; or, like Pylades and Orestes, of whom it is said, they both lived but one life; and where the whole family, like the multitude of believers, 'is of one accord, of one heart, and of one soul in the Lord,' Acts iv. 32, with the increase of God.

I have now despatched what I intended to offer thee, for the advancement of godliness in thy family. If thou art a stranger to this honourable, comfortable work of worshipping God in and with thy family, oh that I could prevail with thee to put the counsel of God speedily into practice! I must assure thee from the living and almighty God, that thou art accountable to the judge of quick and dead, for all the souls in thy family. God hath the chief propriety in every person in thy dwelling. As the flock which Jacob looked after was Laban's, Gen. xxxix. 43, so the family which thou hast the oversight of is God's. 'Thy sons and thy daughters which thou hast born to me,' Ezek. xvi. 20. God may say to thee more truly than Laban did to Jacob, 'These sons are my sons, and these daughters are my daughters, and these servants are my servants, and all that thou seest is mine.' Indeed, God doth in effect say to thee, what Pharaoh's daughter did to Moses' mother, 'Take this child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages,' Exod. ii. 9. Take this son, this daughter, and nurse them for me in my nurture and admonition. Take this man-servant, this maid-servant, and bring them up for me, in my fear and service, and I will give thee

an eternal reward. Friend, thou wouldst be faithful in bringing up children or servants for thy brother or sovereign; and wilt thou be unfaithful in bringing up sons and servants to thy God and Saviour? Is it fit that God's servants should do the devil's work? Let conscience judge. Did God give thee them to be brought up in drinking, or swearing, or lying, or atheism, or like so many heathen or beasts, without any knowledge of his word and will? Did he honour and intrust thee with their education, to have thee poison their souls by thy irreligious pattern, and starve their souls by not giving them spiritual food? Is this thy love to thy Maker and Redeemer?

Besides, I must tell thee, as Jacob was answerable to Laban for the whole flock, if any were torn by beasts, or stolen by day or night, he bore the loss of all, Gen. xxxi. 39, 'Of his hands it was required;' so art thou answerable to God for every one in thy family. If any one be devoured and torn in pieces by the roaring lion the devil, through thy negligence, God will require his soul at thy hands.

O reader, consider, death will shortly break up thine house, when thy children and servants must go to everlasting fire, if they die without grace, and the knowledge and fear of God. If thou art now careless about the eternal good of thy children and servants, that they perish for ever, through thy falseness and unfaithfulness, how dreadful will thy account be! What wilt thou do, when the blood of their souls shall be required of thee? If Christ sentence men to hell for not visiting sick and imprisoned bodies, for not feeding hungry bodies, what sentence will he pass on thee for not visiting those souls committed to thy charge, which were imprisoned by the devil, and sick unto death, and for not giving them the bread of life, but suffering them to starve and die?

If on him that brought a temporal death on Cain vengeance should be taken sevenfold, what vengeance shall be taken on thee, who tumblest others into eternal death! Believe it, reader, these are no jesting things. If, therefore, thou hast any bowels towards the children of thine own body, if thou hast any compassion towards thy poor servants, whom Christ thought worth his own blood; if thou hast any love to thy dearest Saviour, or thine own everlasting salvation; if thou wouldst leave this withering world with comfort, and look into the other world with courage, exercise thyself to godliness in thy family, obey the particulars for that end commanded thee by the infinite God, do thine utmost that all of thy family may be of the family of faith, and all of thine household

may belong to the household of God, that so when the king of terrors shall give a discharge from all relations, thou mayest with thy family be translated from living together in one house to dwell for ever in one heaven.

Reader, thou mayest perceive in the close of the tenth chapter that much more is promised than I have in this treatise performed, the payment of which, though I do at present defer, yet through the strength of Christ I shall not deny. If thou hast any interest at the throne of grace, I do earnestly desire thy prayers that this part may find acceptance with the saints, and be instrumental for the advantage of many souls, and that in the other part I may receive much assistance from the blessed Saviour; thereby I shall be the more enabled to be serviceable to thine and others' salvation.

A good wish about the government of a family, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The government of my family being a special talent and trust committed to me by the blessed God, and being a business of exceeding concernment, both in regard of its influence upon the whole kingdom, which is raised or ruined by the good or wicked management of families, and in reference to the everlasting estates of the precious souls in it, wherewith I am charged, I wish, in general, that I may never, like a rotten post, endanger the whole building of church and state in any degree by my unfaithfulness in my place, nor be so unmerciful and unnatural as to see that bloody butcher Satan drive my children and servants, like silly sheep, to the shambles of hell, and never stir or strive to rescue them out of his hands. But that my resolution and practice may be according to Joshua's religious pattern, that whatsoever gods others serve, whether the world or the flesh, yet I and my house may serve the Lord. Oh that I might so walk in the midst of my house with a perfect heart, that grace, like Mary's box of ointment, may perfume the whole house with its savour, and that in every corner of it, as it was said of holy Hooper's, there may be some scent of godliness.

In particular, I wish that I may keep my house so cleanly swept from the filth of sin, and so curiously furnished with the ornaments of the Spirit, that it may invite the noblest guest, the ever-glorious God, to take up his abode in it. My God hath told me that the house of the righteous shall stand, Prov. xii. 7, though sin rotteth

the timber, and maketh the houses of the wicked to fall; that in the house of the righteous is much treasure, Prov. xv. 6, even when there is but a little silver; that he blesseth the habitation of the righteous, Prov. iii. 33. Surely his blessing can make my bed easy, my sleep sweet, my food savoury, my clothes warm, my dwelling pleasant, my children hopeful, my wife a meet help, my ground full of plenty, and all I set my hands to to prosper. O my soul, what an argument is this to move thee to exalt holiness in thy house! Thy God will bless it, nay, that God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, will come and dwell in it. Without question, his coming will, as to Zaccheus, bring salvation to thy house; the company of this king will turn thy cottage into a court, and his presence will change thy dwelling, were it a prison, into a palace. Oh let nothing be in thy house which may be distasteful to so great and so good a friend. Let no sin dwell in thy tabernacle, but let 'Holiness to the Lord' be written on every person, room, and vessel in it, that whatsoever name other houses are known by, the name of thy house may be from henceforth and for ever, Jehovah-Shammah, the Lord is there.

I wish that I may so give credit to the word of truth, which saith, that 'the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked,' that the flying roll of curses (the length whereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth ten cubits) shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely, and shall consume it with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof, Zech. v. 2-4, and that he will pour out his wrath upon the heathen which know him not, and upon the families that call not on his name; that I may tremble for fear that atheism should reign in my house, and so it should be ranked amongst the irreligious, and marked for vengeance. Alas, what a dreadful noise do those murdering pieces make in mine ears! The curse of God will canker all my comforts, and blast all my blessings, and that both speedily and irresistibly. But, O my soul, meditate a little upon the latter text, which is a prediction as well as a petition. What a bitter potion doth thy God give thee to purge atheism out of thy family! Consider its nature, it is wrath. Pour out thy wrath. God's anger is terrible, like fire, burning and overturning all before it; if but a spark of it light upon his own people, how pitifully do they roar out! Ps. xc. 7, and lxxxv. 4. 'We are consumed by thine anger.' 'Cause thine anger towards us to cease.' 'O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger:' 'there is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger.' Truly, no wonder that they thus bewail it; for who

knoweth the power of his anger? But his wrath is anger in the greatest degree, anger boiled up to the height. Oh, how scalding is this boiling lead! If the wrath of a king be the messenger of death, what is the wrath of an almighty God? This wrath can stuff the bed with thorns, and appoint wearisome nights unto thee; it can sauce thy dishes with poison, infect thy raiment with plague sores, fill thy body with torturing distempers, thy soul with horrors and terrors; it can waste all thy wealth in a moment, and turn thy wife, children, and all thy comforts into amazing crosses and terrifying curses. Hell itself is nothing else but this wrath to come; one spoonful, one drop of it will turn an ocean of the sweetest wine into gall and wormwood. Wouldst thou be an atheist in thy family for all the world, to live one hour under this scorching wrath? Alas, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of thy God, for thy God is a consuming fire. Observe further its measure, 'Pour out thy wrath.' When thy God poureth out his Spirit he giveth it an extraordinary degree. The persons upon whom it was poured, are said to be full of the Holy Ghost. If thy family be irreligious, thou mayest expect this scalding wrath, not by drops, but by showers to come pouring down upon it. O my soul; let this thought soak and sink so deep into thee, that thou mayest dread the omission of duties in thy family as much as the unquenchable fire. Let his favour make thee cheerful in his service, and let his anger make thee fearful of the least sin in thy house.

To this end I wish that I may use much circumspection whom I admit into my dwelling; that as those who are to plant an orchard get the best grafts they can; so that mine house may be an Eden, the garden of the Lord, a Paradise on earth, I may (as my occasions require) look out for the choicest flowers, the best and fruitfullest trees, the holiest Christians in the country. Oh let me never make my house a pest-house, by taking in irreligious and infectious persons, and such as will bring the plague along with them. One scabbed sheep may wrong the whole flock, one putrid grape corrupt a cluster. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Lord, in the choice of inhabitants for my house, let my eye be not only upon my own welfare, and their fitness for my work, but chiefly on thy glory, and their willingness to work the work of him that sent them into the world, John ix. 4. Let me hate the congregation of evil-doers, Ps. xvi. 4, 5, and cxix. Let me not sit with vain persons. Let mine eyes be upon the faithful in the land. Let them that fear thee turn unto me, and such as keep thy righteous judgments. Let me dwell with them here on earth with whom I

shall dwell hereafter in the house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens.

I wish that there may be a church in my house, and all the persons in it, both morning and evening at least, employed in those holy performances which my God requireth. My house should be a resemblance of heaven above. In his greatest and most glorious house, my God is served without ceasing and without sinning. Oh that, though in his lower and lesser house natural and civil actions cause intermission of, and the body of death causeth imperfections in, holy duties, yet he might be worshipped both constantly and perfectly in a gospel and evangelical sense. I have read that amongst the worst of Turks, the Moors, it is a just exception against any witness by their law that he hath not prayed four times in every natural day. I wish that none in my family may be worse than Turks, but that both all apart may secretly, and all together may privately offer up the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise to the Lord my God. Daniel would pray three times a day though he were cast to the lions for it; and shall my family neglect prayer when the omission of it will make them a prey to roaring lions? It is the honour and happiness of my house to exalt the worship of my God in it. His service is the greatest freedom, his work is a reward to itself; why should we be our own enemies in banishing our best friends out of our family? The mercies of my God are renewed upon me and mine every morning; his care and love is continued to us all the day long; the dews and showers of his compassion fall down upon us every evening; shall we be forgetful of him who is every moment so mindful of us? Oh let my family never be so void of grace and manners as not to bid our God good-morrow and good-night upon any pretence whatsoever.

I wish that the word of Christ may dwell richly in my heart and house, that my whole family may have their set meals every day of this spiritual food. How can I expect that children or servants, who know not the God of their fathers, should serve him with perfect hearts? 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Alas! how often are their ignorant hearts (like dark cellars abounding in vermin) full of sin! Oh that I might so talk of the word of God in my house, when I lie down and when I rise up, that it may be written upon the posts of my house and on my gates, (Deut. vi. 7, 8,) that I may so often water the young plants in it, that their first acquaintance may be acquaintance with God, and from their childhood they may know the holy Scriptures and be wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Though others' care be to instruct their servants only in

their own work, let my care be to instruct mine in God's will and word. Though others labour to leave their children rich, let my endeavour be to leave mine religious. Lord, enable me so to teach them thy trade in their youth, that they may not depart from it when they are old, (Prov. xxii. 6,) that their young years well led may be like the sweetness of a rose, whose smell remaineth in the dried leaves.

I wish that all the voices in my house may tuneably sing God's praises; yet that they may not, like trumpets and pipes, make a sound, being filled only with wind, but have hearts fixed and prepared when they sing and give praise. Oh that all the viols in my house may be so in tune, and their stroke so true, that singing with grace in our hearts we may make melody to the Lord. Drunkards have their songs in derision of them that are good; atheists have their sonnets in dishonour of the blessed God; why should not the voice of joy and rejoicing be in the tabernacle of the righteous? Ps. cxviii. 15. Though my house is a tabernacle, and all the inhabitants in it travellers, yet our work is pleasant. Oh let us go merrily on, and make God's statutes our songs in this house of our pilgrimage.

Because my pattern of evil will do more hurt to my family than my precepts can do good, (servants and children being apt to be led more by the eye than the ear,) I wish that I may take heed to myself, weigh and watch over all my words and works, not only for my own, but also for the sake of them that are committed to my charge. Distillations from the head often consume and destroy the vitals; my family is like a flock of sheep, if the first leap through into a ditch or river, the rest are ready to follow. Oh that I might therefore be wary in all my ways, and be so serious in spiritual, so sober in natural actions, so righteous towards men, so religious towards my God, so faithful in every relation, and so holy and heavenly in every condition, that I may have cause to say to my children and servants, as Gideon to his soldiers, 'Look on me, and do likewise,' Judges vii. 17.

I wish that my house may not only spend some part of every week-day, but also the whole Sabbath-day, in the service of my God. It is a special privilege granted me by the Lord for my family's profit, wherein I may be singularly helpful to my own and my household's everlasting happiness. Oh that not the least part of it may be lost, or profaned by any within my gate, either by worldly labour, pastimes, or idleness, but that I may be so mindful of my charge as to take care that my children and servants do for-

bear what my God forbiddeth, and spend that sacred day altogether in sacred duties. To which purpose I desire that all my household, both males and females, (if of capacity,) may appear before the Lord in public, and in his temple give him praise; and that in private I may whet the word on them (as the mower doth his scythe) by going over it again and again, according to the precept, Deut. vi. 6, 7. Lord, let my house on thy day be like thy house, employed wholly in thy worship; and let thy gracious presence so assist us in every ordinance, that the glory of the Lord may fill the house.

I wish that I may manifest my love to the souls in my family by manifesting my anger against their sins. My God hath told me, 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him,' Lev. xix. 17. If it be my duty not to bear with the corruptions of neighbours, much less of my servants and children. Should I suffer them in unholiness, I should bring them up for hell. Those deepest purple sins many times are those which are dyed in the wool of youth. Oh the sad aches which many have when they are old, by falls which they received when they were young! Let me never, like Eli, honour my sons (or servants) above my God, lest my God judge my house for ever for the iniquities which I know, because my children (or servants) make themselves vile, and I restrain them not. Lord, let me never be so fond and foolish as to kill any in my family with soul-damning kindness; but let my house be as thine ark, wherein there may be not only the golden pot of manna, seasonable and profitable instructions, but also Aaron's rod, suitable and proper reprehension and correction.

I wish that I may never expose my family to the suggestions of Satan, by allowing any in laziness, but may be busy myself in my particular vocation, and see that others be diligent in their distinct stations. The lazy drone is quickly caught in the honeyed glass and killed, when the busy bee avoideth that snare and danger. Oh that I and mine might always be so employed in the work of our God, that we may have no leisure to hearken to the wicked one. Adam's storehouse was his workhouse; Paradise was his place of labour. Lord, since thou hast intrusted every one in my house with one talent or other wherewith he must trade, cause me and mine to labour and work in this, and to look after rest in the other world.

I wish, for the furthering of holiness and purity in my house, that I may be careful to keep it in peace. Our bodies will thrive as much in fevers as our souls in the flames of strife. Satan, by

the granados of contention, will hope in time to take the garrison. 'Where strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work,' James iii. 16. Oh that love (which is the new commandment, the old commandment, and indeed all the commandments) might be the livery of all in my family, that there might be no contention there, but who should be most holy, and go before each other in the path which leadeth to eternal pleasures. Because marriage is a fellowship of the nearest union and dearest communion in this world, and because the fruits of religion will thrive much the better, if cherished by the sweet breath and warm gale of love in this relation; Lord, let my wife be to me as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let me be ravished always with her love; let there be no provocation but to love and to good works; let our only strife be, who shall be most serviceable to thy Majesty in furthering one another's eternal felicity. Enable us to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ, and to dwell together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life, that our prayers be not hindered.

In a word, I wish that I may, like Cornelius, fear the Lord with all my house; so govern it, according to God's law, that all in it may be under the influence of his love, and heirs of everlasting life. Lord, be thou pleased so to assist and prosper me in the management of this great and weighty trust, that my house may be thy house, my servants thy servants, my children thy children, and my wife belong to the spouse of thy dear Son, that so when death shall give a bill of divorce, and break up our family, we may change our place, but not our company; be all preferred from thy lower house of prayer to thine upper house of praise, where is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but all are as angels, ever pleasing, worshipping, and enjoying thy blessed self, (of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;) to whom be glory, hearty and universal obedience, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

PART II.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the Worshipful George Bates, Esq. Doctor of Physic, one of the College, and Physician in Ordinary to his Excellent Majesty Charles the Second.

Worthy Sir, that physic is honourable to the professors, and profitable to the natural body, and so to the body politic, of which they are members, is acknowledged by every one that is *sanæ mentis*, and doth not need hellebore. The heathen did not without reason highly commend Hippocrates amongst the Grecians, and Cornelius Celsus amongst the Latins, for being the first that ventured and waded into the depth of that mystery, and by writing transmitted it to posterity; they valued their pharmacia at so high a rate, that Apollo and Æsculapius, esteemed by some the first founders of physic, were adored as gods for the excellency of their invention.[1] The poet doth heroically trumpet the physicians' praise:

Ιατρὸς γαρ ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀντάξιος ἄλλων.—*Homer. Iliad.* λ.
Omnibus est aliis medicus præstantior unus.
'Of men physicians are the best,
And do by far exceed the rest.'

The word of God, which addeth real worth to whatsoever it extolleth, mentioneth physicians, (Gen. l. 2,) by way of honour, before the giving of the law, doth not only implicitly allow, (Exod. xxi. 19, 20,) but expressly command, if the old English translation may be credited, the use of physic. He giveth medicine to heal their sickness, Ps. cxlvii. 3; nay, the blessed God is pleased to style himself Jehovah-Rophi, the Lord the Physician, Exod. xv. 26; and the holy Jesus hath his name, though chiefly in a spiritual sense, from his healing nature and property.[2]

[1] Cicero de natura Deorum, lib. iii. p. 248.

[2] Ιησοῦς ab *ἰάομαι, Sano.* Alii asseruut vocem esse pure Hebræam, *Jehoshua* ve *Jeshua*, et Græcum tantum in pronunciatione.

Health is the prince, the firstborn, as life is the king, of outward blessings. The widow in the Gospel disesteemed her substance in comparison of this jewel. The physician, therefore, which is *manus Dei*, as Hierophilus calls him—the hand of God to bring this pearl to us when we have lost it—may well be welcome and precious. Indeed, were it the divine pleasure to give all men a constant frame of health during their pilgrimage, as Hector Boetius saith of the isles of the Orcades, that the people live there a hundred and twenty years ordinarily in perfect health.[1] And Paulus Jovius reports of our country, that in old time the Britons lived long without physic: this were a wonderful favour; for he liveth miserably that lives upon medicines, and who, to uphold nature, is in a continual use of art.[2] This made Ambrose cry out, *Qui se medicis dederit, seipsum sibi negat;*[3] and Plato complain, that it is a great sign of a corrupt commonwealth where physicians and lawyers abound;[4] but, according to Cicero, *Mortalium nemo est quem non attingat dolor morbusque.* It is not more natural for man to beget a son than for his body to breed sickness.

'Νοῦσοι δ' ἀνθρωποῖσιν ἐφ' ἡμέρᾳ ἠδ' ἐπὶ νυκτὶ
Αὐτόματοι φοιτῶσι κακὰ θνητοῖσι φερουσαι
Σίγῃ ἐπί φωνὴν ἐξείλετο μητιετα Ζέυς.'—*Hesiod.*

Some tell us, that in every two years there is such store of ill humours engendered in one body, that a vessel of one hundred ounces will scarce hold them. Hippocrates himself saith, *Ultimus sanitatis gradus est morbo proximus.* Sure I am with the moralist, *Ipsi ceu Deo nullo est opus*,[5] He is commander of heaven who needeth no help. And Melanchthon doth not without cause bewail his ignorance, and indict him for cruelty, as *felo de se*, who contemned the means (physic) and the ministers (physicians) of health: *Barbara immanitate et inscitia deploranda contemnunt præcepta sanitatis, mortem et morbos ultra accersunt.*[6] It is taxed as a piece of great folly in the Romans, who, when physicians came from Greece to Rome, banished them by the counsel of Cato, as sent by the subtle Greeks to torture the Romans.[7]

God and nature—that *nihil agunt frustra*—have appointed herbs not only for meat, but also for medicine, the virtue and value of which would never be found, nor the herbs made serviceable to their right ends, if some did not employ their time and talents in

[1] Nec domus et fundus, non æris acervus et auri,
Ægroto domini deduxit corpore febres.—*Horat.*

[2] Misere vivit qui medice vivit. [3] Amb. Ser. 22, in Ps. cxix. [4] Cic. 3 Tusc.
[5] Senec. [6] Melanct. De Anima. [7] Mornæus De Verit. Relig., c. 8.

the search. The work, it is confessed, is full of difficulty; but that addeth—as to the ignominy of those empirics who have but one panacea for all people and all diseases, so—to the glory of the ingenious workman. The nature of simples is said by some to alter according to the difference of the places in which they grow, or the constitutions of the persons to whom they are given. They tell us that opium in Turkey doth scarce offend any; but with us, in a small quantity, it stupifieth; that cicuta is a strong poison in Greece, but with us hath not such violent effects. Experience acquainteth us, that what helpeth one hurteth another in the same distemper; nay, that the same patient may receive damage or advantage by his physic as the fit season of taking it is observed or neglected.[1] How miserable, then, are those places which are delivered up to the mercy—I should say cruelty and execution—of mountebanks, who undertake to cure all maladies with one remedy, (as their *aurum potabile*—or usually something worse, for this they often take—seldom give,) or at least the same sore in all constitutions with one salve. Surely the impudence and ignorance of these quacks was that which moved Agrippa to such a heat when he uttered, *Multo plus periculi à medicamento quam à morbo;* and it may be said of such a one, with the poet, none knows

'Quot Themison ægros autumno occiderit uno.'—*Juvenal.*

The medicines they prescribe are usually as ineffectual as that of the Frenchman who gave these verses in writing to his patients for the cure of all diseases:—

'Si vis curari de morbo nescio quali,
Accipias herbam, sed qualem nescio, nec quam;
Ponas nescio quo, curabere nescio quando.'[2]

They are thus Englished:—

'Your pain, I know not what, do not foreslow
To cure with herbs; but what, I do not know,
Place them well bruised, I know not where, and then
You shall be perfect whole, I know not when.'

But what a felicity is it to meet with persons both of much science and conscience in this profession, who understand and consider the cause of diseases, the nature of the ingredients, the constitutions of the patients, the difference of climates, and the proper seasons of administering physic, and accordingly prescribe

[1] In libellis qui vulgo versantur apud literatos, incautiores multa legunt, à quibus decipiuntur; eximia illis, sed portentosum hauriunt venenum.—*Penottus Præf. de Mar. Med.*

[2] Becan. Sum. Theol., part i. cap. 16.

and apply it with faithfulness! Such, honoured sir, through divine providence, hath been my happiness since I obtained the favour of your acquaintance. I should be sordidly ungrateful if I were not mindful how willing you have been upon all occasions—sometimes at midnight—to give your advice gratis to me or mine. But I must especially acknowledge, to the glory of the blessed God, with thankfulness to you—which I voluntarily promised to do publicly some years since, though I had not a convenient opportunity until now—your indefatigable diligence, and little less than miraculous success, about my dear consumptionate wife. The great philosopher saith, He that loseth a good wife hath lost half the happiness of his life. I must confess, to the honour of free grace, that she whom I have found a meet help was nigh unto death—a dead woman long ago in the judgment of all her friends—but God had mercy on her, and not on her only, but on me,[1] and her many small children also, and was pleased to make you the means of very much good to her: to him, therefore, as the author and principal efficient I do publicly give the praise. For,

> 'Dejicit et relevat, premit et solatia præstat,
> Enecat et possit vivificare Deus.'

God only can command health. Physic is only the order in which he is pleased to work. Paracelsus, who boasted that he could make others immortal, died himself before he had attained seventy years, the age of a man. To the divine majesty therefore, the lepers under the law, after they were cleansed, were to offer their gifts, and all sorts after sickness, the ransom of their lives,[2] Exod. xxxi. And I do heartily acknowledge my great engagements to you as his minister and instrument, who were as careful of her, not for your fee,[3] for you never would take a penny, scorning to cure a consumption in the body by one in the purse, as if you would cure by friendship as much as by physic, exactly answering the moralist's[4] description of a tender and ingenious

[1] Sanus sum, gratias ago Creatori, Langueo, et in hoc laudo domini voluntatem.—*Hier. ad Paulum.*

[2] The same word θεραπεύειν, which signifieth to heal, signifieth to worship, because after healing men should worship.

[3] Yet the physician is worthy of a liberal fee. The Abderites, when they wrote to Hippocrates for the cure of Democritus, whom they thought distracted because he always laughed at the ridiculousness of men's lives, sent him word: Quicquid auri apud nos est, libenter persolvemus, etiamsi tota urbs nostra aurum effet.—*Abderan. Epist. Hippoc.* Vis morborum pretia medentibus, Fori tabes pecuniam advocatis fert.—*Tacit. Annal.* lib. l. 11.

[4] Senec de Benef., lib. vi. cap. 16.

physician. *Quare medico plus debeo? Quia ex medico in amicum transit, et me non arte quam vendit, obligat, sed benigna et familiari voluntate. Ille plus impendit, quam medico necesse est. Pro me, non pro fama artis, extimuit. Non fuit contentus remedia monstrare, sed admovit. Interea solicitus assedit, ad suspecta tempora occurrit. Nullum ministerium oneri illi, nullum fastidio fuit. Gemitus meos non securus excepit. In turba multorum invocantium, ego illi potissima cura fui. Huic ego non tanquam medico, sed tanquam amico obligatus sum.* And through divine help as successful as if you had been appropriated, according to the custom of the Egyptians, to the study of that single distemper, and predestinated, according to Paracelsus's opinion, to its cure; wherefore, with that master of moral philosophy, *Nec medico in majus gratia referri potest, nec nautæ si naufragum sustulit.*[1] I cannot be thankful enough to my physician, especially such a one whose worth the whole nation is acquainted with.

The truth is, that if I had been so unjustly ungrateful, as to have studied to conceal the great debt I owe you, there are so many witnesses of it, that I had but consulted my own shame. But as a public confession of my engagements, *in grati animi μνημόσυνον*, I present you with this treatise, the matter of which calls for your perusal, though the author craves your pardon. The work of Christianity in every relation and condition, the subject of it, is clearly consistent with, and necessary to, your calling. The divine and physician do both *convenire in uno tertio;* they are both for curing: the divine heals *corpus per animam;* the physician, *animam per corpus.* Every divine is a spiritual physician, and every physician ought to be a spiritual divine, though not by profession, yet in practice. Marcilius Ficinus was *simul et semel medicus et sacerdos.* Luke, *ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς*, the beloved physician, was a divine evangelist, of whom Jerome excellently, *De medico corporum factus erat medicus animarum, cujus libri quoties leguntur in ecclesiis, toties divina pharmaca hominibus offeruntur.*[2] Theology is the mistress, all other sciences and arts but handmaids; and then they know their places, and serve for the right purpose, when they are, as the spoils which David took from the Gentiles, consecrated to the temple.

All ornaments to a person void of religion are but like flowers to a dead corpse, notwithstanding which it hath neither life nor loveliness. The oracle of Apollo judged Socrates the wisest man of his time; and his scholar, Xenophon, gives him this encomium, *Talis*

[1] Idem de Benef., lib. iii. cap. 35.

[2] Jerome in Epist. ad Philem.

fuit Socrates quem omnium optimum et felicissimum statuam;[1] yet his other scholar Plato acknowledgeth him a great drinker; and his master Aristotle saith he was *Scurra Atticus.* Democritus, who was esteemed a famous philosopher, an expert physician, an excellent mathematician, a profound politician, *omnifariam doctus*, of whom Hippocrates writes, *Nihil in toto opificio naturæ de quo non scripsit.* And Aristotle himself, who is styled *Regula naturæ, naturæ miraculum, ipsa eruditio, sol scientiarum, mare, sophia, Antistes literarum et sapientiæ*, are both by Lactantius clearly proved to be illiterate fools and speaking asses; *Nihil, inquit, inter hos et bestias nisi quod loquuntur.*[2] Learning without grace converts the blessings of God into the provision of lusts; as the pearl which beautifieth a man is the disease of the filth that breeds it, so those parts which render a Christian more comely, are mortal many times to others, being instruments of sin, and full to their corruptions. Like Belshazzar, they devote those golden vessels to the use of their idols, which should be serviceable to the sanctuary.

He that for parts and learning is nature's pride, and the very utmost she hath to shew, without religion, is but a learned dunce. *Quia Christi non habet condimentum, vanus est ejus labor, et peritura ædificatio*, saith Jerome.[3] *Neque enim præstantissima naturæ et industriæ dona, aut alicujus morbi acutioris cruciatus lenire, aut inquinatæ et rugientis conscientiæ ictus et laniatus repellere, aut fugientem revocare animam, aut Gehennæ flammas quasi injecta guttula minuere, aut denique horribilis iræ Dei excutiendo sustinendo vel oneri vel minimas vires subministrare possunt*, according to learned Reynolds.[4] No, it is godliness alone which, as the diamond to the ring, addeth real value to all natural and acquired accomplishments, and which is the only ark for a soul to be sheltered in, when a deluge overfloweth.

He is the best scholar that knoweth the plague of his own heart, and hath got it healed with the blood of Christ. There is no grammarian like him that hath learned how to decline sin in every case; no logician like him who can find out Satan's subtleties, and evade his paralogisms; no arithmetician like him who hath learned to number his days, and to apply his heart to wisdom; and no musician like him who doth by a holy life, to the tune of truth in the inward parts, sing forth the praises of his God; he is best skilled in astronomy that hath his conversation in heaven, and

[1] Xenoph. de Dict. Socrat., lib. iv.

[2] Lactant., lib. iii.; De Sapientia, cap. 17, 20; lib. xxvi. cap. 8.

[3] Jerome in Ezek. xiii.

[4] Animalis Homo, p. 30.

walketh daily in the view of those celestial beauties and glories. None is skilled in economics but he who walketh in the midst of his house with a perfect heart. He is an excellent rhetorician that, like Jacob, can plead so as to overcome and prevail with God himself. He is the famous physician that makes it his chief study to procure his vitiated nature healed by the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. And he is the only politician who is wise to salvation. These things will appear to be truths when we all appear in the other world. Great parts without piety will bring at that day but the greater punishment. Field-officers that boast before the battle with their scarfs on their sides, and their plumes in their hats, at the head of their divisions, are glad when the army is routed, and all are taken, to throw away their gaudy feathers and gorgeous armour, and would willingly pass then for common soldiers. Oh, how glad would unsanctified scholars be, who are now cried up for sublime wits, for the quintessence of learning, for living libraries, and divine eagles, for *Magistri Sententiarum*, *Doctores Angelici*, *Seraphici*, if they could pass at the great day for the greatest naturals, and most ignorant innocents that ever were in the world!

Honoured Sir, I write these things, partly to shew that this tractate, though not physical, may properly enough be presented to a physician, when religion is so absolutely requisite in all; and partly to quicken all scholars to diligent endeavours after true piety, for a right management of their parts.

Though corruption cankers the greatest blessings, and makes them tributary to Satan, yet religion will reduce them to their obedience, and make them pay their homage and allegiance to the king of saints. This is in part discovered in the ensuing discourse, in that part which concerneth a saint's carriage in a prosperous condition. Indeed, extremes are dangerous, a middle estate is safest; as a middle temper of the sea, between a still calm and a violent tempest, is most helpful to convey the mariner to his haven. But the embroidered providences of God are like a curious piece of arras made up of several pieces, some whereof are crewell or thread, others silver and gold; some are cast down with loads of misery, others are loaden with extraordinary mercies; now both these conditions are great temptations, especially the latter.

The highest towers are soonest destroyed with lightning, and those boughs which are fullest laden are apt to break with their own weight. Excessive heat, as excessive cold, quickly degenerates into poison; but grace is a strong corrective that will not only pre-

serve it from being mortal, but also make it medicinal and useful to the health of the soul.

The good Lord grant that the vessel of your precious soul, when furnished with the largest sails of prosperity, may move the more swiftly; and in the greatest storm of adversity, be so ballasted with grace as to sail safely to your port of bliss; that in your short day you may be always purging out by faith and repentance your spiritual diseases, and visited with the divine saving health; that at the evening of your mortal sickness, the great physician may administer a cordial to you of his own living water, and that at the night of death, when your sun shall set, the Sun of righteousness may arise upon you with healing under his wings, and make your soul, as his body in the gospel, every whit whole.

Medicus medicorum tibi, una cum charissimâ conjuge, liberisque suavissimis, animis in hac vita saluberrimis benedicat, et pro summa tua in evangelii ministrum pietate, salutem in futura sempiternam retribuat. Ita precatur et, dum in vivis fuerit, precabitur.

Reverentiæ tuæ in Christo obstrictissimus,

GEORGIUS SWINNOCKUS.

E Musæo meo in Magna Kimbell, 11th Nov. 1663.

THE PREFACE AND EPISTLE TO THE READER,

WHEREIN THE RIGHT CHRISTIAN IS CHARACTERISED, OUT OF THE GENERAL HEADS IN THE THREE PARTS OF THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

Reader, knowledge is the excellency of a man, whereby he is usually differenced from a brute. The knowledge of Christ is the excellency of the Christian, whereby he is differenced from a heathen; a practical knowledge is the excellency of the true Christian, whereby he is known from the false one; knowledge without practice is like a glass eye, all for show, and nothing for use; right knowledge, like Rachel's mandrakes, is helpful to make the saint fruitful; it hath not only eyes to see God's will, but also feet to walk in his way; it is life eternal so to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. The spring of this knowledge may be in the head, and its rise in the understanding; but it slideth down into the heart, breaketh out into the life, and so floweth along in the channel of grace and holiness, till at last it lose itself in the ocean of glory. Constancy in this holy course is the crown and character of the sincere Christian. An infirm soul, like a feverish body, hath an unequal pulse; he is, as his fits are, now and then pious, when his worldly pleasures will give him leave, and his earthly profits allow him leisure; but the sound soul, like the natural sun, is always running this spiritual race. Others, like the merops or woodpecker, may have gay feathers, make a great profession, but, as that bird, ἐν τῇ γῇ νεοττεύει, they build their nests, lay up their treasures on earth; but the upright soul hath his hopes and happiness in the other world, and therefore is always trading and sending thither: 'I have inclined my heart

to keep thy statutes always unto the end,' Ps. cxix. 112. Observe, first, The truth of his holiness, I have inclined, not my ears, nor my tongue, but my heart; secondly, The test of it, to keep, not my own inventions, nor others' traditions, but thy statutes; thirdly, The term of it, not for a fit or a start, but alway, without intermission, unto the end, without backsliding. The time of my subjection to God's statutes is till I enter upon my eternity, and time, with me, shall be no more, unto the end. 1. His obedience is real, not verbal, to keep thy statutes; action is the life of religion; the gracious person can as soon cease to be, as cease to do; his voice is like Elijah to Obadiah, As the Lord liveth, I will shew myself. Hypocrites, as they say of the nightingale and cuckoo, are *vox et præterea nihil*, nothing but voice and talk; their whole work consisteth in words, as if they were lawyers, to get their living by much speaking; but though those work only with their tongues, the Christian speaketh powerfully with his hands; his works praise him in the gate. 2. His obedience is cordial as well as real—I have inclined my heart. The wheels of his actions are regular in their motion, but his heart is the spring of the watch, which sets them a-going. His heart is the text, upon which his conversation is a living exposition. His comment may fail and fall short, but the text is ever sound and true. 3. His obedience is constant as well as cordial, always, unto the end. Always, in every place, passage, and providence, every calling, company, and condition, in every action, ordinance, and relation; wherever I go, and whatsoever I do, my heart is always inclined to keep thy statutes. Unto the end; as long as I live, till death put an end both to my labour and my life. The tradesman in his particular calling, who intendeth to make anything of it, spendeth most of his time at it; he is either buying in, or selling out his wares, or casting up his books, or fetching in his debts, some way or other furthering his calling. It is not the picture of wares on the stall, or the master's standing with his hands in his pocket, that will preserve his family, or prevent poverty from entering his shop like an armed man. The Christian in his general calling, if he will get anything by it, will have no leisure to be idle or loiter, but must be both diligent and constant at it. The great profession which some make, if religion be not their business, will never prevent their eternal perdition. How many vessels have suffered shipwreck for all their glorious names of triumph, safeguard, and good speed! The weapons of many soldiers, who pretend that they are listed under the Captain of our salvation, will, like rusty rotten muskets, recoil

and fly in their faces when they come, in an hour of death or day of judgment, to use them.

Nature hath made the roots of many trees bitter, whose fruits are very sweet, signifying to us that pleasures are not to be expected without pains. The heathen poet could see and say as much.

> Ἄργὸς γὰρ οὐδεὶς Θεὸν ἔχων ἀνὰ στόμα
> Βίον δύναιτ' ἂν συλλέγειν ἄνευ πόνου.—*Eurip. Rhes.*

The Israelites could not enjoy the land flowing with milk and honey, till they had fought with, and conquered the Canaanites, and forced their way through grievous obstacles and oppositions. The saint must pass by the angel with a drawn sword in his hand before he can enter into paradise. His work is much and manifold, his enemies are many and mighty; and it will cost him hot water before he can display his colours upon the walls of the new Jerusalem, and receive his crown. If he should, like the wasp, intend chiefly his pastime and pleasure, and filling himself with the purest honey, he would quickly grow foggy, and be easily slain by his foes. He doth therefore like the bee, of whom some write that she never loseth a day from work abroad if the air will give leave; and when the weather is tempestuous she cleanseth her hive, carrieth out the filth, and keepeth watch and ward at her gates for fear of her enemies, and hereby she gets something to live upon when others starve.

The nature and necessity of this religious industry I have largely discussed in the first part of the Christian Man's Calling; the general heads of which treatise, as also of this second, and the third and last (which part, God continuing health and help, thou mayest see within a few months) I shall epitomise in this ensuing character of the true Christian.

The right Christian is one whose conversation is in heaven, though his habitation be on earth; he dwelleth here below, but he liveth above; religion is his mistress, to whom he hath surrendered the keys of his heart, and to whom in his life he is not a complimental, but a real servant. The world may be in the suburbs, but God reigneth in the city. He useth the creatures, yet enjoyeth none but Jesus Christ. Heaven is the centre to which all the lines of his life tend, and in which they meet and end. Holiness is his highway, in which he daily walketh, and he thinks that day lost in which he makes not some progress towards his journey's end, eternal life. He travelleth in company with many civil and natural affairs, but he is specially watchful that they keep their distance

all the way. He is one that makes, not his own nor any other's, but God's will the rule of his worship. He is careful to pay his God his due to the utmost of his power, though to do it he is forced sometimes to compound with his family or particular calling, and to pay them short, yet he dares not pay his piety to God in counterfeit pieces, or in any coin but such as hath a divine stamp, the King of heaven's image and superscription on it.

He giveth religion the right hand of fellowship in his daily conversation, causing his servants' bodily and worldly business to wait till his Master, the blessed God, be served. He doth not mind godliness by the by, or when he hath nothing else to do, but prefer it in his practices, as well as his principles, before all other things whatsoever. He hath more manners than to let the Lord of glory wait his leisure; and more wisdom, when he is going to speak to the King of kings about matters of life and death, than to let the trifles of this world stay him by the way. He mindeth his business when he is about it, and dareth not do his holy work by halves; whether he pray, or hear, or read, or meditate, or whatsoever sacred performance he sets upon, he serveth his God with all his heart and with all his might. He so considereth the weight and consequence of his religious duties, the worthiness and holiness of God with whom he hath to do, that he believeth no labour to be great enough, no carriage to be gracious enough, for the manner of his worship; no love to be hot enough, no honour to be high enough for the object of his worship; nay, and his very all to be too too little for him. He is not only diligent in, but also constant at, this heavenly calling; when he is walking with men, he walketh with God; all the while he liveth in the flesh, he liveth after the spirit; religion is his daily and hourly companion; at his table, it is his sauce, which makes his meat savoury; in his shop, it is his scales, which makes his wares weighty; in his chamber, it is the hand that makes his bed easy; all his colours are laid in this oil of grace. His whole life, though it may have now and then a comma and a parenthesis in it, is but one continued and entire speech of prayer and praise to his Lord. He laboureth whilst he liveth, and neither desireth nor expecteth rest till the night of death bring him a writ of ease.

He is one that is persuaded religion to be the end of his creation, and of all the mercies that he enjoyeth, and so his God's end is ever in his eye, and he minds the message about which his God sent him into the world, whatsoever he omits. He is more rational than to conceive his heaven-born soul to be given him that he might live a

brute, to eat and drink, and sport and sleep; and more religious than to prefer his meat before his message, or himself before his Master. He often admonisheth himself (with Bernard in his studious cell), Soul, soul, remember for what end thou camest hither; and is a fellow-commoner with angels in obeying the precepts, and feeding on those pleasures which flow from the fountain of his being and happiness. He cannot think of the day wherein his Master will call him to an account, how he hath done the work about which he is set, and discharged the errand about which he is sent, without fear, and therefore dares not be false or unfaithful. He sets out in earnest for the undefiled inheritance, as knowing that it cannot be attained without violence. He believeth that the gate of life is strait, and none can enter in except they strive; that he must conquer if he will be crowned, and win the weight of glory if he will wear it. Therefore he overlooks all discouragements, overleaps all impediments, puts forth all his strength, and works in this, that he may rest in the other world. He judgeth the matters of his God, of his soul, and of eternity, to be infinitely more ponderous and weighty, more excellent and worthy, than the affairs of his family and of his body, which last but for a few days, and thence he is provoked and persuaded to give them the precedency in all his actions, to pursue them with industry against all opposition, and to persevere in them with constancy to his dissolution.

He is one that doth not only use diligence himself, but also bemoans the negligence of others; his soul weeps for others' wickedness in their eager pursuit of lying vanities, and careless neglect of real and saving mercies. When he beholdeth worldlings toying with mean trifles, and playing like children—only this difference, with greater baubles—take such pains to dig into the mines of the earth for gold, and then to find nothing but their own graves; when he beholdeth the greatest and wisest of the world, like Augustus, to play with nuts, or Alexander Severus with dogs, or Lucian's Jupiter, to spend their time in painting the wings of butterflies —to be so busy about nothing—he doth not, like Democritus, laugh at the ridiculousness of their lives, but with Heraclitus, mourn for their madness and misery. When he observeth amongst professors so much science, and so little conscience; so many Christians without Christ; so much talking of God's word, and so little walking in God's way; so many who, like trees, seem to aspire to heaven, and yet are rooted in the earth, contending vehemently, like fishes for a few crumbs that are thrown into the waters; like some resty jades, when good provender is before them,

to pick at straws that lie under their feet; to ride, and run, and watch, and work for a thing of nought, for a few poor scraps that comes from the creature's table, when the flesh of Christ, which is meat indeed, and the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed, and all the dainties of the gospel are before them and offered to them,—he doth both wonder at and bewail their folly and frenzy.

He is one whose pious pulse is ever beating, and whose religious soul is ever breathing after his God and Saviour. His holiness, like the fire on the altar, comes down from heaven: and though it may sometimes abate, sometimes increase in its heat, yet it never goeth out day nor night. He is holy, as his God is holy, in all manner of conversation. Though his godliness, like a simple of a predominant quality, give a tincture to all the mixtures of his natural and civil actions, yet it gives the greatest relish and savour to his spiritual compositions, which belong to the sanctuary. He is always circumspect in his carriage, because he is ever in the view of God's eye; but he is most pious when he comes solemnly into God's presence, knowing that great princes are more curious of their near attendants than of those that are at a further distance. He considereth that holiness becometh God's house, that dead duties are no way suitable to a living God, that the ordinances of his God are edged tools, and not in the least to be jested with, that his soul and eternal estate are at stake in every performance, and therefore, as David, he danceth before the ark with all his might; he prayeth, he heareth, he singeth, he communicateth, he doth all with heat and heartiness, with love and liveliness, as for his life, as for his soul, as for his everlasting salvation. The vessel of his soul moveth steadily, and saileth swiftly on the waters of the sanctuary, being ballasted with a holy fear, and furnished with the sails of a living faith. He goeth to duty, not for duty, but to give glory to his God in them, and to receive grace from his God through them, that he might by them be made partaker of the divine nature. He prayeth with reverence, as to a God, and with confidence, as to a father, and gets his whole living by this trade of begging. He believeth his prayer to be answered when his petition is denied, and never goeth from the beautiful gate of God's temple without some alms. As in the presence of the Lord, he gives audience to his word, and is known to be one of Christ's sheep by his ear-mark, of hearing his voice and following him. He layeth up the jewel of the word in the cabinet of his heart, and layeth it out as occasion serveth in his conversation. He goeth to the sacramental board as to his dying bed, and thinks no prepara-

tion great enough for the reception of the Lord of glory. His first question at the table, is, with the church, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?' and with the Greek to Philip, Sir, I would fain see Jesus: and if Christ be absent, whoever or whatever be present, the cup, though it be gold, hath no worth, no wine in it, for he goeth from the table more hungry and unsatisfied than he came to it. He goeth to ordinances, as Zaccheus to his sycamore tree, to have a sight of his Saviour, and as Moses to the mount, commune with his God, and then only he is at ease, when he can accomplish his end. He counts that prayer the best prayer wherein he enjoyeth most of his Saviour; that sermon the best sermon that giveth the deepest wounds to his sins, and those elements the only sacrament that are a taste and seal of this eternal salvation.

He is one that of all seasons hath the highest respect for the Lord's day, as having experimentally found that to be the day of his greatest spiritual feasts. He needeth no priest, as the Jews had to sound a trumpet the day before, and give notice of the ensuing Sabbath, for he longs for it more than lovers for the day of their wedding, and the whole week to him is but a preparation for the heavenly works of that honourable day. He emptieth his heart overnight of those ill humours which may be contracted by the world's coarse fare, that he may have the better appetite to those dainties which shall be set before him on that day. In it he cheerfully meditates on God's works, and carefully attendeth on God's word. He worketh the work of him that sent him into the world all the day long, and wisheth the day longer for the duty's sake. He esteemeth every part of this golden season precious, and doth gather up the fragments of it, that nothing be lost. At the night of this market-day for his soul, he calls himself to a reckoning what he hath got, how much he hath gained, and counts it an ill day if he be not more informed in his judgment, or reformed in his affections, and more conformed in his conversation to his Lord Jesus Christ.

He is one that frameth his kitchen, his natural actions, as well as his chapel, his spiritual, according to the rule and square of religion. He doth not feed without fear, but eat his bread before the Lord, as knowing that it doth not nourish by its own power, but by divine providence, and that it is the means of preserving his life, not the end of his living. He feedeth his flesh, but doth not pamper it, as fearing that God, who alloweth him sufficient for his need, but not provision for his lust. He keeps a strict hand on this unruly horse, his appetite, lest, if the reins lay on its own

shoulders, it should run on and wander to his ruin; yet, because his body is his soul's beast, on which it dependeth very much in its motions, he rules over it with reason, not with rashness; useth it as a servant, not as a slave, and alloweth it convenient refreshment and rest. But his recreation is not his occupation, only his sauce, which he useth sparingly, to make his meat, his work, relish the better, and go down the pleasanter.

He is one that mindeth his general calling in his particular, and tradeth with his temporal stock for the true riches. His care is to make the maid to know her place and wait on religion; and his fear lest at any time she should usurp authority over her mistress. If the world smile on him, he dares not trust it, but endeavours, when its possessions flow in upon him, that his affections may not flow out upon it. When he aboundeth in goods, he aboundeth in thankfulness to the giver, and desireth more to improve his wealth aright, than to increase it. If the world frown upon him, and he decrease in the means of the earth, he laboureth to decrease in earthly-mindedness, and rejoiceth at the taking away of the fuel, when he findeth thereby the fire to go out. Howsoever the wise God throw him, he falls like a die upon a square, having learned in all conditions to be contented, how to abound and how to be abased.

He is one that is holy at home as well as abroad, and walketh in the midst of his house with a perfect heart. His house is a little church, consecrated to the dearest Redeemer, wherein his God is praised and worshipped, and a true though small resemblance of the highest heavens. 'Holiness to the Lord' is written on all the vessels, rooms, and, in his desire and endeavour, on all the inhabitants in it. It is the grief of his soul to have a cursed Ham, or scoffing Ishmael, or profane Esau in his family; and oh, how his heart aches for fear any should drop out of his house into hell! He is a priest to pray for them, a prophet to instruct them, and a king to govern them according to the word of God. He is specially watchful to set them a good pattern, knowing that he, like the admiral in a navy, carrieth the light for all the rest, and they are prone to imitate his practices, whether right or wrong.

He manifesteth religion in every relation, and filleth them up with suitable conversation. He is not like the earth, light in one part, and always dark at the same time in others, but as the heavens, at all times, and in all parts light. As he is a parent, he doth not, like Æsop's ape, hug his child to death with fondness, nor bring up his children to bring down his family, but bringeth

them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He desireth more to see them gracious than to see them great, and takes more thoughts for their immortal spirits than for their fading flesh. He provides for their bodies, and gives them such education as may make them serviceable to men; but he prefers their souls, and is mainly solicitous about that breeding which may make them serviceable to the blessed God. As he is a son, he labours to approve himself the most dutiful child in the country. He honoureth his parents, both inwardly and outwardly, in his language and carriage, and submitteth to them in all things in the Lord. He yieldeth obedience to his earthly out of conscience to his heavenly Father, and payeth his duty both to God and man in the same action. If he be rebuked for his faults, he is not only patient to submit, but also pious to reform, and kisseth the rod for teaching him his lesson. Though his parents be wicked and careless of his weal, yet he is tender of their welfare. He dareth not discover their nakedness, nor disobey their lawful precepts, because they themselves are profane, but he serveth them with the more care to win them to Christ; and is so affectionate towards them that he doth not only to his power supply (if need be) their poverty, but would lay down his natural life to prevent their eternal death. If he be a husband, in his behaviour towards his wife he imitateth his head in his carriage towards his body: he nourisheth and cherisheth her as the Lord the church. She is in his eye the fairest of women, and in his judgment the fittest for him of any in the world. He chose her more for her weight in grace than in gold, and he valueth her not according to her estate in the earth, but in the covenant. Whatsoever she be, either for person, or portion, or parts, or parentage, he esteemeth and affecteth her more for her piety, and because of God's ordinance, than for any or all of them. If she err, he seeketh to draw her home with the cords of love; if she continue in the faith, he seeketh to confirm her with the bands of kindness. Love is his whetstone to provoke her to obey him; and love is his loadstone to allure her to obey God. His love is one ingredient in all compositions; and his love is her cordial in her sick and sad conditions. He loveth her outward man above all his means, and affordeth it what her necessity and conveniency require, and what his estate will allow; but he is exceeding tender of her inward man, praying with her, and for her, instructing her, and using all helps that Christ may be her husband, and heaven her jointure. If she be a wife, she is subject to her husband, as the church is to Christ. She doth not question his place nor quarrel with his power, but in

obedience to God's ordinance honour his person, and obey his lawful pleasure. Though he command what is below her, or painful to her, if not sinful, she doth not complain of, but comply with his commands. Her clothing is the satin of sanctity, the purple of purity, the white linen of innocency, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Her meat and drink is to do the will (under God and in subordination to him) of her husband. If he be satisfied, and her God not disobeyed, whoever be displeased, she is contented. She reverenceth him as her head, and loveth him as her heart; and as she is one with him in name and condition, so she endeavours, as much as may be, to be one with him in nature and disposition. She is faithful to his eternal, as well as his temporal estate, and more careful to have him rich towards God than rich in this world. She is mindful of her household, as well as her husband, and is a meet help to him, not only in his personal, but also in his domestical concernments. 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her food from far. She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard; she girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good, her candle goeth not out by night; she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she stretcheth out her hands to the poor, yea, she stretcheth out her hands to the needy. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness; she looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Many daughters have done virtuously, but she excelleth them all.'

If he be a master, he carrieth himself towards his servants as one that hath a Master in heaven. He knoweth that his servants are made of the same mould, and may be heirs of the same happiness with himself; that though there be a civil, yet there is no natural or spiritual distinction, and he treateth them answerably in all his actions. He commandeth them, as Abraham his household, to keep the way of the Lord; is more careful that they mind God's worship than his own work, and is more sorrowful when God is disobeyed than when his own affairs are neglected; he useth his servants, but dareth not abuse them by overworking or under-

keeping them; he giveth to them what is just and equal, both in their work and reward; but he is more diligent to teach them, and more desirous they should learn, the trade of Christianity, than his own calling.

If he be a servant he liveth like the Lord's freeman, walking at liberty and seeking God's precepts. He denieth sinful subjection to any, but he yieldeth civil subjection to all whom his God hath set over him. Though his master be froward and crabbed, he serveth him with fear and conscience, as persuaded that his respect and obedience is due not to man's nature, but to God's order and ordinance. If his master be holy, he does not slight him because a brother, but counts him worthy of double honour. He honours him for his relation as his master, and for his religion as his Christian master. He is diligent in his duty whether his master be present or absent, knowing that the eye of his God is ever on him, and as having the fear of his God ever in him. Whether his master be good or bad, courteous or churlish, he is faithful in his calling, doth his work as to the Lord, hoping that of the Lord he shall receive his reward. He serveth his Maker in serving his master, and doth all in singleness of heart as unto Christ, looking at last for the inheritance of a son.

He is one that is holy in every condition, as well as in every relation, and walketh in all weathers in the way of God's commandments. In prosperity he giveth God praise, in adversity he is patient, in both pious. He suiteth his carriage not according to his company, but according to his condition; he seeth by experience that as fat bodies are most liable to diseases, and the best meat to be blown with flies, so prosperous men are most prone to profaneness; therefore though his mountain be never so strong, he is not secure; but the more wealth he hath, the more watchful he is lest it should be a provocation to wickedness; his heart is not the more lifted up for the greatness of his heaps, but in a high wind he keepeth a low sail, because that is most safe. His substance is not the object of his confidence, for he seeth it is a sandy foundation; he trusteth not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth him all things richly to enjoy. He is sensible of others' sufferings, notwithstanding his own safety; and though his own drink be wine, yet it is purl-royal in which he tasteth his brethren's wormwood. He valueth himself not by the confluence of creatures, but by the unsearchable riches that are in Christ, for he believeth no other wealth will be current in the other world. He beholdeth many to be high whose lives speak them to be now

under God's hatred, and in the road to hell; and therefore he rateth himself not by his houses, or lands, or temporal possessions, but by his right to the Father s house, the inheritance of the saints in light, and his eternal portion. He giveth God the praise of all his plenty, believing that not his own diligence, so much as God's gracious providence, is the original of his prosperity. He is therefore chiefly glad of power, and riches, and outward mercies, because he may get his God the more glory and honour, and hath opportunity thereby of being the richer in good works. He doth, like the industrious bee, work hard in this summer of prosperity, and lay in provision, that he may have some honey of comfort to feed upon in a winter of scarcity and misery. He is not afraid of the snow when it cometh, being prepared for it with double clothing. In the hard weather of adversity he keepeth his spiritual health, nay, he increaseth it, and is made thereby partaker of God's holiness. He dares not murmur at instruments, much less quarrel at the efficient; but he seeth God's hand at the bottom of the warrant for his correction, and that keeps the king's peace in his breast. He knoweth that though second causes may intend evil, yet the first cause, whose will must stand, intendeth his good; and so he patiently submitteth to his punishment, because it tendeth to his profit. He justifieth God when he condemneth him; and though God kill him, yet he will love him and trust in him. He rejoiceth in the tree of his comforts, the God of all consolation, when the fruit is fallen off; and though the fig-tree doth not blossom, nor the vine yield her fruit, yet he rejoiceth in the Lord, and is glad in the rock of his salvation. When he is scourged he feels the strokes, yet not to fret at the rod, but to find out the root whence it grew—his sin, that he may amend what he hath done amiss. Indeed, as soon as the disease sheweth itself, he inquires into the cause; as soon as the messenger appeareth, he asketh his errand, and despatcheth that as suddenly as he may, to hasten his departure.

He is not only religious in his duties to God, but also righteous in his dealings with men. Though he be married to religion, yet in this she is not like his wife, she is not a keeper at home; but wherever he goeth she beareth him company. He is not like a hypocrite, tender of the first table and careless of the second; nor like a heathen, who will not wrong his neighbour of the least mite, but robbeth God of millions; but he exerciseth himself to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards all men. He traffiketh for grace when he is trading about his goods, and

laboureth that therein he may do good both to himself and others. Every place he is called to is a temple, all his works are worship, and every man he deals with is a monitor to remember him to offer sacrifice to his God.

When he is alone he is at leisure to be serious with his own soul, and to inquire into its case and condition. In his greatest company he is alone to himself, and in his greatest secrecy in company with his God. The truth is, he is never alone, for the Father is always with him; and he thinks what a holy man (Dr Sibbes) was wont to say, My God and I are good company. Yet he often sequestereth himself from the crowd, that he may enjoy the sweetest kisses from Jesus Christ. He can tell how to be solitary as well as how to be sociable, and hath many a time found the golden and silver mines in solitary places where were no inhabitants. He hath had many a good turn in his garden or private chamber, when he hath walked unseen, and Christ hath been his fellow-traveller. No bread hath been more sweet than that which he hath eaten in secret, when Christ hath been his fellow-commoner.

He is for company as well as for privacy, but he is for good fellowship; he delights only in them that are true Christians. He chooseth rather to travel alone than with thieves, wicked men, that will conspire to rob him of his precious grace, at least of his precious time. He is a companion of all that fear God and keep his statutes; he chooseth to converse with saints, though he useth sometimes, as his occasions and relations call him, to converse with sinners. He doth not, like the cameleon, turn himself into the colour of his company; nor, like liquid things, take his form from that place in which he is; but as a solid body, keeps his figure wherever he be; nay, he endeavoureth, as those that carry strong scents about them, to perfume all persons and places in which he cometh. If he be among the good he watcheth their words, their works, that he may receive some good from them, and do some good to them. He hopes that his heart, as cold as it is will get some heat by being so near such glowing coals; and he provoketh them, to his power, and in his place, to love and to good works. The communion of saints is a great comfort to him in his pilgrimage, and an article both of his creed and his practice. If he be among the bad, his work is to make them better; and he is watchful that they do not make him worse. Though he cannot avoid the company of sinners, yet he is careful to avoid the contagion of their sins. He knoweth that it is hard for sheep to be in the midst of such thorns and to lose no part of their fleece;

therefore when he seeth he can do no good, he hasteneth away, lest he should receive some evil.

Godliness is his business, not only amongst all persons, but also in all seasons. He doth not put on religion, as some their best clothes, on some high or some holiday only, but it is his ordinary and his constant attire. Every week-day is with him a Lord's-day, for he liveth in the fear of the Lord all the day long. When he openeth his eyes in the morning, he lifteth them up to his Maker, both with praise for the last night's protection, and in prayer for the ensuing day's providence. He sets out for the other world before he undertakes his worldly works, and expecteth no blessing on them till he have first begged it. He dares not venture abroad fasting, for fear of infection from those many ill fumes and vapours which he is sure to encounter. He spendeth the greatest part of the day in his particular vocation, but so that in it he is limited and directed by religion. He buyeth as one that possesseth not, selleth as one that hath a soul to save, useth the world as not abusing it, because the fashion of this world passeth away. His prudence guideth him, and his piety swayeth him so to follow his shop as not to neglect his closet, and so to take care of the bodies, as one that must give an account of all the souls, in his family. He is tender of his time all the day long, to redeem it from needless talk and vain company, and very unwilling to cut such a precious commodity to waste. He watcheth his heart through the whole day, knowing how treacherous an inmate it is, and that he walketh constantly amongst enemies, which are neither few nor asleep. He usually calleth his soul to a reckoning at night how it hath behaved itself in the day, and so makes his factor faithful, by accounting with him frequently. As God is the Alpha, the beginning, so he is the Omega, the ending of the day; for he doth not commit his body to his bed before he hath asked his Father's blessing, and commended his soul into the hands of his Redeemer. When he hath washed off the dirt that his soul hath contracted by touching and meddling with worldly things, in the blood of his Saviour, and bewailed them before the Lord, then he can lie down with comfort, and God giveth his beloved sleep.

He is one that visiteth the sick rather out of conscience than out of courtesy, and more to inquire of their spiritual than of their bodily welfare. If ever men be serious and come to themselves, it is when in their own thoughts they are dying and going from all others; therefore he will by no means neglect such a price, but improve it to the utmost for their eternal peace. He will for the

time become a physician, and so wisely considereth the spiritual state of his patient, and accordingly ordereth his prescription. If the patient be a scandalous person, one whose disease seemeth to be desperate, he giveth the stronger physic. He dares not be so unfaithful as scarce to touch his festered wounds for fear of putting him to pain, but endeavoureth to search them to the bottom. He sets before the soul the heinous evil and horrid end of sin, the unspeakable madness and unconceivable misery of sinners, and the certainty of all this under the hand of God himself. He useth the law's hammer to break the heart if possible, thereby to prevent hell. He dares not give the least cordial till he hath found his former physic to have had some considerable operation. If the person be one of a moral civil life, yet one whom he fears in a natural estate, he commends civility, but discovers its defects, and prefers sanctity in all his discourse. The substance of his speech is concerning the nature and necessity of regeneration, as the only means appointed by the God that cannot lie for the obtaining of salvation. He speaks so affectionately, with so much love to his dying friends, that you may perceive the working of his heart in the motion of his lips. He labours for life to save poor souls from eternal death. Oh how eager and earnest is he to persuade his sick friends to be holy and happy! If he meet with a patient that is pious, yet perplexed with doubts and fears, he hath his cordial juleps, the gospel promises, to preserve such a soul from fainting. He looks for some savoury expression from this dying Christian, that may stick upon him whilst he hath a being. When he heareth a dying sinner cry out of the world's falseness to him in this his extremity, though he had been a faithful drudge to it all his time, he layeth up that saying in his heart, and hopes he shall love the world the less whilst he liveth. When he heareth the dying saint commend the faithfulness of his God in owning him, now all the world leaves him; when he heareth him tell how fast a friend, how choice a good, how vast a portion the blessed God is, how sweet his ways are, and bless the time that he spent in praying and reading, and examining his own heart; he thinks, there is somewhat for me; and when he goeth home, he beggeth that he may set the greater price upon his God, and take the more pains in holy duties till he comes to that hour.

When it comes to his own turn to go up to mount Nebo and die there, he expires, like the Arabian phœnix, in a bed of sweet spices, the exercise of the graces of the Holy Spirit. He considereth his infinite obligations to his dearest Saviour, and that he hath but a very short time now to work in, (for he is going to receive his

reward,) and therefore he will endeavour, like his Redeemer, how much service soever he hath done his God in his life, to do, if it be possible, the most by his death. Both his house and his heart were set in order beforehand, and now he hath nothing to do save to die. But oh how sweetly, if not hindered by his disease, doth this dying swan sing! He raiseth up himself with Jacob to bless his children, (if he have any,) and commandeth them with David to know the God of their fathers, and to serve him with perfect hearts and willing minds. He commits his fatherless children to God, and bids his widow to trust in him. He wisheth all his friends and acquaintance to mind the one thing necessary, and to choose the good part which shall never be taken from them. 'My friends,' saith he, 'if ye will believe a dying man, one that dares not look God in the face with an untruth in his mouth, one that speaks not by notion or hearsay, but by experience, seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; honour God in your health, if ye would have God to own you in your sickness. I have served him so many years; I have found him a good master; his ways the most pleasant delightful ways, and surely his end, which I am now going to possess, will be perfect peace. Alas! all other things are vanity and vexation of spirit. Relations are vanity; possessions are vanity; wives, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and friends are vanity; houses, and lands, and honours, and treasures are vanity; all things jointly, everything severally is vanity. I thought them so, I used them so. I am not deceived; I find them so. No person in the world can give me the least cordial; no things in the world can afford me the least comfort. Were either the persons or the things of this world my portion, how poor, how pitiful would my condition now be! Oh turn the world off before it turn off you, as ye see it serveth me! Oh get the world taken out of you before ye are taken out of it, or ye are undone for ever! Hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments. It is the time I have spent in his service, the talents I have employed according to his command, and the seasons that I have improved for his praise, which now, through his grace in Christ, as evidences of my uprightness, yield me both courage and confidence. I have been a poor weather-beaten passenger, tossed up and down in the tempestuous sea of this world, with the high winds of men and devils' rage; but how it revives me that I am in sight of my blessed harbour and eternal haven! I am going to reap the fruit of all my hearty diligent service; I would say, of my Saviour's bloody sufferings. I have

many a time heard what great things God had promised, and Christ had purchased for them that believe; I am now going to see, and, beforehand, conclude that the half is not told me. I am confident, when I come to the Father's house, and enjoy those blissful mansions and rivers of pleasures which are there, I shall have cause to say to them, as the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, It was a true report which I heard in the land of the living, of thine excellency and worth; howbeit I could scarce believe the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and behold the half was not told me. Thy beauty and thy glory doth infinitely exceed the fame which I heard. My dear friends, farewell; remember the words of a dying Christian. Godliness is the greatest gain; piety will be most profitable at last. Make religion your business; exercise yourselves to godliness, be constant, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.' And thus, like some sweet perfume that is burnt, he leaves a sweet savour behind him, whilst his soul ascendeth in the flame, and is honourably conveyed by glorious angels into heaven's blessed court.

This is the substance of the whole, which I fully intended to have finished, as thou wilt perceive in the beginning, in this treatise; but the importunity of some persons, and the stationer's desire to have it in two parts, hath caused me to publish this second, and to reserve the rest for a third part.

Herein, reader, I have drawn the saint's picture, by which thou mayest perceive somewhat of the beauty of his person, and the excellency and loveliness of his life. This indeed is the true life, all other but the shadow of living. Let conscience be judge. Is it not a thousand pities that men created with rational spirits,[1] and capable of such a noble employment, as, like those celestial courtiers, to wait always on, and to walk with the King of saints, should, like silly pismires, spend their time and strength only in hoarding up heaps of earth? By it thou mayest also behold the vast difference between the conversation of the gracious and the graceless. How the wicked, or men of this world, resemble the swan, for all her white feathers and stately neck. Though she live amongst fish, she lives upon weeds; though they live amongst the weighty mercies of eternity, the love of God, the blood of Christ, and the embroidery of the Spirit, yet they live upon the trash and toys of this present time. Now the men of the other world, like that princely bird the eagle, are of piercing sights and lofty flights, live above, make little account of things here below, not stooping to them but

[1] O curvæ in terras animæ et celestium inanes.—*Pers.*

when necessity calls them, and then in subordination to their chief end. Friend, if thou art a stranger to those heroic designs and noble delights of true Christians, repent speedily of thy folly, or else I must say to thee, as the bold tragedian did to Pompey, ' The time shall come that thou shalt fetch deep sighs, and therefore sorrow the more because thou sorrowedst no sooner.' If thou art experimentally acquainted with them, give God the praise, (whose free grace makes thee to differ,) and remember in thy prayers,

Thine and the church's servant, for Jesus' sake,

George Swinnock.

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

PART II.

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself unto godliness.—1 Tim. iv. 7.

Exercise thyself unto godliness.

As the blessed God is compared to the sun, Ps. lxxxiv. 12, and the dearest Jesus to the Sun of righteousness,[1] Mal. iv. 2, so godliness is frequently in Scripture compared to light[2], John i. 15, partly in regard of its excellency. Light is the purest and most immaterial of all bodies. Its clarity and beauty do render it lovely. Its birth is noble, from above; it is a beam darted from the sun's most glorious body;[3] it is the great ornament of the world, without which the whole universe would be but a dismal dungeon of dreadful darkness. So grace is excellent; godliness is the excellency, and purity the comeliness of the rational creature. There is a beauty in holiness as well as the beauty of holiness, and indeed such a beauty that none ever saw it but admired it, yea, and was enamoured with it. It is of a celestial extraction, its father is in heaven; it is the picture of God's own perfections, therefore called the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4; the righteous is, therefore, more excellent than his neighbour, Prov. xii. 26. The godly, though poor, are gold, jewels, and vessels of honour; when their ungodly neighbours, though rich, are dross, dung, and vessels of dishonour. Holiness is the life and glory of the little world man, without which, notwithstanding all the flowers of his natural and acquired

[1] Deus lux vocatur propter summam sapientiam, sanctitatem et felicitatem.

[2] Pii omnes κοινωνίαν habent cum Christo luce, merito ergo nomine lucis sanctitas vitæ significatur.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v. 8.

[3] ἥλιος *ab* ἥλη, *i.e.* splendore.

accomplishments, he is but as a body without a soul, both uncomely and unsavoury.

Partly in regard of the universality of its influence. It is said of the sun, the fountain of light: 'His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof,' Ps. xix. 6.[1] Its light is of as large extent as its heat, for light is the chariot in which heat is conveyed to the lower world; light peeps in as well at the peasant's cottage as the prince's court, and frisks up and down not only in the stately parlours, but also in the homely prisons. The sun, though locally in heaven, is yet virtually on the earth, gilding the mountains, glistering in the valleys, dancing up and down in the pleasant meadows, viewing all countries and kingdoms, enlightening all at once with his splendour, and everywhere overspreading the face both of sea and land; thus true godliness is of a universal extent. The light of holiness doth accompany the true Christian at all seasons, not only in his higher and nobler, but also in his lower and lesser actions. Whether he be in his closet or at his calling, whether he be solitary or in company, in every relation in which he standeth, and in all conditions to which God calleth him, he walketh always as a child of the day, for the light of godliness still attendeth him.

An unsound Christian, like an aguish body, hath his cold as well as his hot fits, his sick as much as his well days. As a meteor he hangs in the air, and sometimes moveth towards heaven, and presently falleth again towards the earth. At some seasons he is very precise, at other times very profane. In some things, though they be of small consequence, he is zealous and fiery hot; in other things, which are of greatest concernment, he is frozen and key-cold, Mat. xxiii. 23. Religion is this man's good humour, which is now and then upon him; but godliness is the constitution of a real Christian, the divine nature his second nature.[2] As the sinner polluteth with sin, so the saint perfumeth with sanctity, whatsoever he toucheth. Godliness is the highway of the righteous, Prov. xvi. 17, and they are travellers always going on in their journey towards their heavenly country. Some walk in this highway a little for recreation, with some company which they are related to, or have a dependence on; but they quickly grow weary, and give over. Others are seen sometimes in this road when their ends call

[1] Sol semper ambulat, nunquam quiescens, et sua luce omnia illustrat.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v. 8.

[2] In luce ambulat, *i.e.*, in purissimis actionibus versatur.—*Grot. in* 1 *John* i. 7.

them, and their interests command them;[1] and as thieves, whose constant haunts are in the woods, do sometimes cross, nay, ride in the highways a mile or two together to execute their own designs the better, in robbing the honest countrymen; but to these it is a byway, not a highway. The true saint is the right traveller, who, though in a mist he may a little miss it, and through mistake turn out of it, yet quickly discovers his error, and walketh in it from morning to night. This light shineth in upon him in his chamber, in his shop, at his table, in all other places, as well as when he is in God's temple.

How the Christian may be always running this race set before him, and wherever he be going, or whatsoever he be doing, make religion his business, hath been in part discovered in my former discourse, the substance or epitome of which I have given the reader in the preface to this; what remaineth I shall here present to thee, is reducible to these three particulars:—

First, I shall speak to the manner of exercising thyself to godliness, and that—

1. In thy special relations.
2. In all conditions, whether of prosperity or adversity.
3. Thy dealings in general with all men.
4. In all companies, whether good or bad; and therein I shall speak both to thy choice of companions and thy carriage in company.
5. In solitariness, or when thou art alone.
6. On a week-day from morning to night.
7. In visiting the sick.
8. On a dying bed.

Secondly, I shall speak to those means which must be minded by all who would drive this high and heavenly trade, and make religion their business.

Thirdly, I shall lay down some awakening motives, to quicken all sorts of persons to follow this honourable and profitable calling.

[1] Ea est vera pietas quæ præponit divina humanis, et perpetua temporalibus.

CHAPTER I.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relations of parents.

First, Thy duty is to make religion thy business in thy relations.

The body of godliness parteth itself into these three principal members—our duty towards God, towards ourselves, and towards other men. The three adverbs of Paul are the most substantial nouns in religion. 'The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, and hath appeared to us, teacheth us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live *righteously*, *soberly*, and *godlily* in this present evil world.' [1] Godliness is here strictly taken, and relates to the immediate worship of the blessed God; sobriety includes our carriage in reference to ourselves in particular; righteousness concerneth our dealings with, and deportment towards others, whether our relations or those that are nearer, or strangers and those that are further off. In those three channels the stream of godliness runneth.

That which I am now persuading thee to, is to exercise thyself to godliness in thy relations. Be not like the moon in her increase, lightsome only in one part, holy only in one relation, and at some times; but like the sun, lightsome in every part, holy in every relation, and at all times. Hypocrites carry religion as thieves do a dark lantern up and down for their own ends; and as the lanterns have light on one side, as much as will serve their own turns and designs, but the greatest part is darkness, so is the holiness of a hypocrite; it may shine upon a private respect in one relation, but it doth not appear at all in another; when the godliness of a sincere soul is as a candle set up in the midst of a room, which giveth light round about, especially to them that are near it.[2]

The excellency of a member consisteth in its fitness for, and serviceableness in, those peculiar offices to which it is designed; much of the excellency of a member of Christ consisteth in his ability for, and fidelity in, those several relations with which he is invested. Oh, it is lovely to behold a ring, which way soever it is turned,

[1] Hic itaque tribus partibus summam Christianæ perfectionis comprehendit apostolus.—*Marl. in Titus* ii.

[2] Verus Dei cultor non patietur, quoad in se erit, eum exulare a domo sua.—*Calv. in Acts* x.

sparkling gloriously with divers diamonds—I mean a Christian acting and exercising graces suitable to every relation. Indeed, relation graces are the grace and glory of religion.

There are three relations in a family[1]—parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants; in each of these Christians must make religion their business.

1. I shall begin with the first of these. Men and women, as they are parents, must exercise themselves to godliness.

I shall divide the duty incumbent on parents into these two generals:

1. In relation to the souls and spiritual estate of their children.

2. In relation to the bodies and temporal estate of their children.

First, In relation to the souls of their children. The souls of children are of infinite value, and they are committed by God to the parents' charge, therefore herein their greatest care must appear: 'Ye fathers, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,'[2] Eph. vi. 4. Many are careful to educate their children in the favour of great men, but, alas! who brings up his children in the fear of the great God? Augustine saith,[3] his mother travailed in greater pain for his spiritual than for his natural birth; but surely there are few Monicas in England. Most mothers are so senseless of the worth and weight of their children's souls, and so careless what becomes of them in the other world, that when their sons and daughters come to die, they may bespeak them, as Cratisiclea in Plutarch did her dying child, *Ah quo, pueri, estis profecti?* Ah, my dear children, whither are ye gone? Whether to heaven or hell, whether to matchless and endless mercy, or unspeakable and unchangeable misery, I know not. Mothers too too often prove monsters, and are cruel to the children of their own bodies;[4] as the mother of King Edward the martyr, who cruelly murdered her son. 'Even the sea monsters draw out the breast to their young ones; the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostrich in the wilderness,' Lam. iv. 3. The sea-horses, or sea-calves, or seals, or whales, according to different expositors, have teats, and give suck to their young, but the daughter of Zion permits her little ones to perish like the ostrich, Job xxxix. 14, 15, 16. If it were such a crime, and caused such sad complaint, for mothers to neglect and

[1] *τρεῖς συζεύξεις ἐξ ὧν οἰκία σύνισταται.—Arist. Polit.*, i. 3.

[2] Bone Deus! quam paucos reperias qui tam sunt soliciti quomodo pie et honeste vivant filii, quam curant ut amplam relinquant illis hereditatem, qua post obitum illorum splendide et otiose delicientur.—*Musculus in Gen.* xviii.

[3] Augustine, Confess., lib. v. cap. 9.

[4] Improbus ille puer, crudelis tu quoque mater.

famish the bodies of their little ones, what is it to starve their souls?

Dudilius relates a sad story of Bochna, a woman who had but two sons, that whilst she was walking with one toward the river, she heard the other cry, and hastening back she saw a knife sticking in him, which killed him quickly; and she returning to the other child, thinking to solace herself in him, but in her absence he was fallen into the river and drowned. The negligence of parents is often the cause of children's eternal death; but as the law of man hangs those mothers that kill their children's bodies, so the law of God will damn them that kill their children's souls. Some fathers also, worse than bloody Herod, murder the souls of their own children. Philip, the king of Spain, out of an unnatural zeal, suffered his eldest son Charles to be murdered in the Spanish Inquisition, for favouring the Protestant party. Woodman, the martyr's father, betrayed him to the bishops, who put him to death. It is barbarous to deprive one's child of natural life; but oh, how bloody is it to deprive them of eternal life! If he be cruel that sends them to the grave, what is he that sends them to hell! Surely such are not *parentes* but *peremptores*. The holy apostle observeth that the wicked world, like a carcase, will every day be more unsavoury than other. In the last days perilous time shall come, that like the serpent Satan, the older it is the more wily and wicked it will be; and one argument whereby he proves it is this,—men shall be 'without natural affection,' 1 Tim. iii. 1, 3. He doth not say without human affection, which is a love to men, as they are men; nor without Christian affection, which is a love to saints, as they are saints; but without natural affection, which is a love to such to whom they are bound by consanguinity or affinity, and so are taught by a special instinct of nature to be tender of. Some parents have less pity for their relations than the parable mentions Dives to have had in hell: 'I pray thee, father, send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torments,' Luke xvi. 27, 28.

It is no wonder that many children, instead of being great comforts, prove grievous crosses to their parents, and bring their hoary heads to the grave with sorrow; for they were not only brought forth in sin, but also brought up in sin. How can it be rationally expected that ground never sowed with good corn should bring forth any other than weeds; or that they should not be undutiful to the fathers of their flesh, who were never taught their duty to the Father of spirits? Aristotle observeth that the raven, an unclean creature,

is careless of his young, and ἐκβάλλει τοὺς νεοττοὺς, (Hist. vi. Cap. 6,) expelleth them out of his nest, so unnatural is he. But Ælian (de Animal. iii. Cap. 43) taketh notice that as this bird doth neglect her young, so the young do neglect the old ones, and sometimes set upon them when they are not able to resist, and wound them. It is most just with God that that ground which fathers will bestow now no pains on to dress, should bring forth such thorns and briers as shall be pricks in their eyes, and pierce their very hearts with anguish and sorrow. The speediest way to turn thy children into swords to wound thy very soul, is to suffer them for want of pious education to wander from God and his word. Such parents, like Eli, bring up their children to bring down their houses, and to bring their own souls to the earth with grief.

Motives.

I shall offer thee two or three arguments to quicken thee to mind the spiritual good of thy children, and then acquaint thee wherein it consisteth.

First, Consider thy children's natural condition. A child in the Latin is called *puer*, *quasi purus*, as if pure (Berni. de Orig. Ling. Lat.;) but it is not meant absolutely but comparatively. They are white paper compared with them who have blotted their lives with many sins; but children have much impurity in them; they bring a world of wickedness with them when they first come into a wicked world; and therefore in the Hebrew are derived from a word which signifieth evil, unrighteousness, wickedness, because as soon as they know how to do anything they do things that are evil. Ignorance and folly are the two cords with which Satan binds them to that stake, at which many burn for ever; like condemned prisoners, they go out of a dark dungeon to execution. They are children of wrath, because children of disobedience. Ground that is barren is nigh to cursing, and therefore hath need of manuring, but especially ground that aboundeth in weeds should be dunged and dressed. Truly such soil are thy sons by nature, and therefore there is a necessity of their religious nurture. They are trees void of good fruit, and unless they be by pious education changed and ingrafted into Christ, they will be cut down for the unquenchable fire. Thy children are by their births more defiled in their souls than in their bodies. Ah, thou canst

not conceive how filthy their inward man is, and therefore it behoveth thee to get them washed by the blood and Spirit of Christ, lest they perish in their pollution. The first receiver into which thy child is taken, and the first bed in which thy child is wrapped, are both spun and woven of sin and shame; and surely thou wantest the compassion of a father if thou dost not strive to mend that by education, which thou hast marred by propagation.

It is said, 'There was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead,' Exod. xii. 30. Are there not many dead in thy house? nay, are not all thy children naturally 'dead in sins and trespasses'? What cry dost thou make to God for their quickening? What care dost thou take for their enlivening? We read of the pelican, that if her young ones are stung or bitten with serpents, she will wound herself till she bleed, and give them her own warm blood to recover them. And when thy children are wounded and stung mortally by the old serpent the devil, canst thou sit still, and never stir to recover their dying, gasping souls? Remember that young lapwings are soon caught up by every buzzard.

Puerilitas est periculorum pelagus, Youth is an ocean of dangers. Within, without, on every side they are beset with perils; the flesh is most strong and stirring, the world is most amiable and taking, besides, the wicked one is subtle and tempting, ever striving to hale them to hell; and what shall they do, in the midst of such enemies, if they have no defensive weapons? A blind man may easily be led into a pit. Thy children are all born blind, therefore it will not be hard to lead them to hell. Children are compared to arrows, Ps. cxxvii. 4, 5. Now we know that sticks are not by nature arrows; they do not grow so, but they are made so; by nature they are knotty and ragged, but by art they are made smooth and handsome. So children by nature are rugged and untoward, but by education are refined and reformed, made pliable to the divine will and pleasure. They are also compared to corner-stones, Ps. cxlvi. 12, which are rough and unfit for use, as they are taken out of the quarry, and therefore must be hewn and carved before they are laid in the foundation. 'Truly thy children are averse to all good, and need much pains, and much polishing,' Ps. cxlvi. 12, that they may be serviceable to the sanctuary.

As the culture of the earth doth help to deliver it from the barrenness of its own nature, so the pious education of children is a special means, through divine assistance, to heal the viciosity of their depraved natures. Socrates confessed of himself that his

natural inclination was exceeding bad, but by the study of philosophy, he altered and overruled it, (*Cic. Tuscul.* lib. iv. 9, *in fin.*) The saving knowledge of Jesus Christ will do infinitely more in young persons towards the mastering and conquering their vicious propensities. Though the best find the corruption of nature, like a simple of a predominant relish in a compounded medicine, to give too much tincture to other superinduced qualities, yet grace will cast it down, even there where it cannot cast it out.

Secondly, Consider thy affection to thy child. This near relation commandeth entire affections.[1] Love usually, like a stream, runneth swiftly downward from parents to children. The truth is, parents must needs love their sons if they love themselves; for the child is the parent multiplied; the son is the father in a later and newer edition; a child is the father's bowels. 'Receive him,' saith Paul of Onesimus to Philemon, (ver. 12,) 'who is mine own bowels;' because he had begotten him in his bonds. A spiritual son is the bowels of a minister; a natural son is the bowels of his father; for to this the apostle alludeth. Where there is any similitude of ourselves, either in qualities and accidents, as between some friends; or in substance, as between parents and children,—upon such naturally the beams of love do extend; and the greater the likeness is, the hotter is the love. The likeness in substance being the greatest—for children are the branches sprouting from the body of their parents—the love here must needs be hottest. The Greeks call their children φίλτατα, most dear; the Latins, *cari*, darlings. There is an ocean of love in a parent's breast.

Now, how wilt thou manifest thy love to thy children, if thou dost not teach them God's law? Is he a loving father that trims and adorns his children's clothes, but starves their bodies? Surely, then, they are cruel parents who feed their children's dying flesh, but murder and famish their immortal spirits. What respect dost thou shew to a pearl of great price, if thou strivest to make the cabinet glorious, and neglectest all care of the jewel? How little are thy poor children beholden to thee, if thou providest for their backs and their bellies—feeding them to the full, till they kick with the heel at thee, and clothing them above thy purse, till they grow proud and contemn thee—when thou hast no care to feed them with the bread of life, and to clothe them with the graces of the Spirit? Is it true love to be tender of thy neighbour's plants, and murder his person? Surely no more to be careful of the vege-

[1] Omnis in Ascanio chari stat cura parentis.—*Virg. Æne.* Filius est aliquid patris. —*Aquin. Q. Disp. de pec. Orig.*, Art. 8.

tative or sensitive faculty of thy children, that the soul may like salt preserve the body from putrefaction, and suffer the rational part eternally to perish.

Plutarch reporteth of the elephant, that her natural affection is such to her young, that if she see them fallen into a deep pit, she will, though it be present death, leap down after them. Thy children are falling into the bottomless pit; they are not yet in the place of torments; now how wilt thou shew thy love to them? God doth not require thy perishing with them, but thy prevention of their perdition. Surely thy love should work forcibly to keep them out of the fiery lake.

Gregory the Great, seeing the merchants of Rome setting forth many beautiful British boys to sale, sighed and said, Alas! that such fair faces should be under the power of the prince of darkness. Oh, what pity is it that thy lovely and beloved children should be void of grace, and under the power of the devil!

The moralist[1] assureth us, that such is the force of natural affection, that even vicious men desire that their sons may be virtuous; and good men that their children may be better. How strong, then, should the stream of thy affections run towards their salvation, when grace and nature both meet together in one channel! A learned writer[2] giveth this reason why that clause is inserted in the second command, 'Visiting the sins of the father upon the children;' because those that have not a spiritual principle to make them forbear idolatry and false worship, may yet be moved to forbear it out of a natural principle; that they who will not avoid sin out of love to God, may yet do it out of love to their children. Parents' love should move them to loathe sin for their children's sake, and to endeavour that their children should do so too. The great naturalist[3] can tell us, that to love is to desire good things for the persons beloved, and to labour to attain them.

Thirdly, Consider the time of their youth is the principal time. 'To everything,' saith the wise man, 'there is a season,' Eccles. iii. 1. Now it is a great part of spiritual wisdom to observe and improve those seasons. It is folly in a high degree to stay till an opportunity is gone; and it is the top of wisdom to wait till an opportunity is come, and then to make use of it. When the tree is small, it may be easily bent which way you will; but when it is grown to some bigness, it will sooner break than bow. When thy children are young, thou mayest probably persuade and prevail

[1] Πατὴρ ὢν ἤπιος.—*Senec.*
[2] Tertul. Advers. Mar., cap. 14.
[3] Arist. Ethic., lib. ii. cap. 4.

with them to mind holiness and heaven, (while they are under the rod they are usually under rule;) but if then they be neglected, and be once grown headstrong, it will be easier with blows to break their backs, than with counsel and admonition to break their hearts. The only time to back colts is when they are young, before their mettle be too high; afterwards they are unruly and untractable. What physicians observe of natural, is true of spiritual diseases:[1] the best way to subdue and expel them is to take them at their first rise, then to apply means for their riddance. When once diseases have corrupted the blood, and are turned into the habit of the body, it may be beyond the most able person's skill to remove them. Thy children, when little, are wax, most apt to receive impressions: then, therefore, stamp God's seals on them, lest Satan mark them for his servants and his sufferings.[2]

Take a bladder whilst it is wet, and newly taken out of the beast, and a little breath will fill it out; but let it alone till it is dried, and all the wind in the world cannot do it. Be diligent to fill the heart of thy child with grace and godliness whilst it is young and tender, and there is great hopes, through the blessing of God, of accomplishing it; but delay it till his heart be hardened through custom in sin, and thou mayest work long enough at the labour in vain: Prov. ix. 18, 'Correct thy son betime, whilst there is hope,' saith Solomon; implying that if correction be deferred, the expectation in it will be frustrated: by losing the season thou mayest lose thy son. It is vain of servants to speak of salting their meat when it is already stinking and unsavoury. The best crop may be expected from a park when it is first ploughed up.

It is possible to turn a little stream which way you please; but when it comes to be a great torrent, it is hard work. The chief season to write God's law in the hearts of any is when they are young; then they are white paper comparatively, and fittest for any inscription; as they grow up they are quickly blotted and blurred with folly and falsehood.

It is observable that in the Gospel, of all who were possessed of the devil, the evil spirit was most hardly cast out of him whom he had possessed from his childhood, Mat. xvii. 15. The longer a person hath had possession of an estate, the stronger will his title be, and the more difficult to eject him. Old corruptions are like old customs, not easily parted with.

4. Consider the good thou mayest do by endeavouring the conversion of thy children. As by neglecting their religious nurture

[1] Venienti occurrite morbo. [2] Qu., 'suffragans'?—ED.

thou dost more harm than thou canst imagine, so by God's blessing on their pious education thou mayest do more good than thou canst conceive. It will be comfort to thyself. 'The father of the righteous rejoiceth,' Prov. xxiii. 24. It is said of Charles the Great, that he had such virtuous children that he could not be well without their company, nor find in his heart to part with them, though it were to be well married. Aristotle saith that *πολυγονία* is no blessing unless it be *εὐγενεία*; that a numerous posterity is not a mercy unless it be virtuous. Many children may be a misery; but holy children are ever a mercy indeed. Jerome writeth of Paula, that she rejoiced exceedingly in hearing her niece, of the same name, sing hallelujah in her cradle. The natural parent may say, as well as the spiritual, 'I have no greater joy than to see my children walking in the truth,' 2 John 4. Old Jacob was young again almost for joy when he heard that his son Joseph was alive. Will it not rejoice thy heart to see thy children alive to God, whom thou fearest to be dead in sin?

It will be profitable to the church and state. Good children make good magistrates and good ministers. If the several members be useful and serviceable in their places, how happy would the political body be! The Lacedemonian, therefore, did not without cause inflict a severe punishment on those parents whose children were ill-conditioned.[1] If the materials be rotten and bad, such will the house be which is made of them. When children come vicious out of their parents' hands, no wonder that they be pests and plagues to the church and state to which they belong. Some give this reason why Nero was so barbarous and bloody in his government, because his nurse made him often to suck blood in his infancy.

A wicked father in York may kill many souls in London by his vicious son that keeps house there, and poisons others with his ungodly counsels and cursed example. David at Jerusalem slew Uriah when he was many miles from him. A faithful and skilful physician may, by a receipt which he gives to some few, save many lives at a distance. A gracious father, by principling his children aright, may convert men and women that dwell far from him. Nay, when he is dead, he may be instrumental that others may live.

If the canker take the young trees in the nursery, they will never be good when transplanted. Wicked children are the original of

[1] Juventus Reipublicæ seges est, at si grando aut alia quædam calamitas segetem corrumpat, messis nulla fuerit spes reliqua.—*Euling. in Eph.* v.

wicked parishes, and wicked kingdoms.[1] If the blossoms be bad, the fruits can never be good. Man and wife are the first[2] pair in nature, and the original of all the rest; they are the stem and stock, according to whose sprouts, whether good or bad, the whole country is like to be stored.

It will be profitable to themselves. Pious education is a good antidote against the poison of heretical opinions, carnal suggestions, and Satan's temptations. It is a good fence to a field which keeps off cattle, which would injure it. Hereby thy children will be fore-warned of, and fore-armed against, the erroneous principles and scandalous practices of others. It is the opinion of a worthy divine,[3] that if parents did their duties as they ought, the word publicly preached would not be the ordinary means of regeneration in the church, but only without the church, among infidels; God would pour out his grace so upon the children of his people, and hear prayers for them, and bless such endeavours for their holy education, that we should see the promises made good to our seed; and that the unthankful Anabaptists, that will not confess that the children of saints are any nearer God, or more beholden to him than pagans, should by sweet experience be convinced of their error, and be taught better how to understand that our children are holy.

Natural fathers, by doing their duties, may prove spiritual fathers, and they that have been instrumental for the conveyance of sin, may prove pipes for the conveyance of grace to their seed. Now if it be such an honour and happiness to convert a stranger, what joy will it be to thee to convert thy own child, to save his soul alive! James v. 20. Their pious education may be profitable, though not presently. The good seed thou now sowest, may yield a blessed crop, though a nipping winter should come between; however, thou hast delivered thy own soul; the master hath his quarterage, whether his scholar learn or loiter, and the physician hath his fee, whether the patient recover or die.

It may be profitable to posterity. Religion this way may be transmitted from generation to generation. Sin is propagated from father to son, from one generation to another, ever since it had a being in the world; and why then should not religion?[4] If Satan will still have his agents, and such as will entail his malice and

[1] Conjugium principium orbis est et quasi seminarium.—*Cicer. De Offic.*, lib. i.

[2] Primum par et fundamentum omnium parium.—*August. De Bono Conjug.*

[3] Mr Baxter's Saint's Rest, third part.

[4] Simul cura et studium propagandæ veræ doctrinæ nobis injungitur, quo post mortem nostram superstes maneat.—*Calv. in Ps.* xxii. 32.

hatred against God and godliness on their children, and children's children, to the end of the world; should not the blessed God have his agents, such as shall endeavour that his cause be faithfully pleaded by their posterity? What the prophet saith of the vine, 'Destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it,' Isa. lxv. 8, I may say of thy children, Do not, by carelessness in their education, destroy them, for there is blessing in them. One vine may yield slips and suckers for many others, and from it may vines] successively be continued to many ages. One child well nurtured may help others for many generations to bring forth such fruit as shall rejoice the heart of God and man.

In reference to the souls of thy children. These several duties must be minded.

1. Thy duty is to dedicate thy children to God by baptism. As God gives them to thee by a free donation,—'These are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant'—so thou shouldst give them back to him, by a religious dedication of them to his service; sacrifice all thy Isaacs to the Lord's service. When Hannah had received Samuel from God, she presently returns him back to God. Therefore saith she, 'I have lent him to the Lord as long as he liveth,' that is, I have returned him whom I borrowed by prayer, 1 Sam. i. 28.

List thy children under the captain of their salvation betimes. It was the commendation given Goliath by Saul, that he was a soldier from his youth, 1 Sam. xvii. It is the privilege, and let it be the praise of thy children, that they are the soldiers of Christ from their infancy. It is hopeful that they will fight the Lord's battles well, who are sworn soldiers to him in their swaddling-clothes.[1]

I say, dedicate thy children to God by baptism. If thou art in covenant thyself, thy children have a right to that seal of the covenant.[2] And saith God to Abraham, 'I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee, Every man-child amongst you shall be circumcised,' Gen. xvii. 7, 10. Two things are clear, from these texts—

1. That the children of godly parents were in covenant with God.

[1] Filiis piorum virorum nulla ratione denegari potest sacramentum baptismi. Ratio præcipua est quia sunt in fœdere, sicut et liberi Israelitarum. Sicut igitur illis non denegabatur sacramentum veteris fœderis, circumcisio, sic neque nostris denegari potest novi fœderis sacramentum, baptismus.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v.

[2] Ipsi infantes in gratuito Dei fœdere comprehenduntur.—*Beza in Mat.* xviii.

Hence I would infer that the children of believers are still in covenant with God, or else there was a time when they were cast out; but none can shew any scripture which speaks that ever the children of believers were cast out of God's family and covenant. Besides, if the children of believing Gentiles are not in covenant with God, as well as the children of believing Jews, then the charter of the church by the coming of Christ is lessened in a great measure, this great privilege of having our children in covenant being taken away; when none will deny but Christ did enlarge, not lessen, his people's privileges.

A second thing I gather from the forecited place is this, that children being within the covenant, have a right to the seal of the covenant. He that hath a right to a house and land, hath a right to those deeds and evidences which relate to that house and land. If thou art in Christ thyself, hope well of thy children; they are capable of the habits of grace, of being united to, and blessed by, the Lord of glory.

Indeed, if thou art not holy thyself, thou canst have little hope in thy children; the promise is to you, first, and to your children, afterwards, Acts ii. 39. Though he who is free of the city himself may make his child free, yet he that is no freeman himself cannot make any one free; thy children's admission into the visible church of Christ must be upon thy account. Their spiritual privileges, in this respect, as their temporal estate, must come by inheritance. Thy piety may be profitable to thy posterity. 'Oh that there were a heart within them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them and their children for ever,' Deut. v. 29. So also thy profaneness may be thy children's prejudice; the members smart for the aches and diseases of the head. Job, speaking of a wicked man, telleth us, 'If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword, and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread,' Job xxvii. 14, 15. Ahab's sons witness the truth of such texts; they inherited not their father's crown, but his curse.

Valerius[1] observeth that though Dionysius after his sacrilege escaped untouched in his person, yet he was severely punished in his posterity; God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. Though in respect of the other world, the son shall not die for the iniquity of the father, Ezek. xviii. 17, that is, eternally; yet in respect of this world, God layeth up the iniquity of parents for their children,

[1] Valer., lib. i. cap. 2.

Job xxi. 19, puts the father's debts on the child's score, and suffereth his justice and judgments to arrest him for it. Even children that have been good, have suffered for their father's sins, 1 Kings xiv. 12, 13. The branches fare the worse for the defects that are in the root; and the branches thrive the better for the sap that is in the root.[1] 'The just man walks in his integrity, and his children are blessed after him,' Prov. xx. 7.

2. Thy duty is to instruct thy children in the word and will of God. The prince of philosophers writes of the sea-eagle or sea-mew, that ἀναγκαζει τέκνα πρὸς τον ἥλιον βλέπειν, She constraineth her young ones to look upon the sun. Thy work must be to endeavour that thy young ones may by faith behold the Sun of righteousness. 'Teach a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he shall not depart from it,' Prov. xxii. 6.[2] Observe the precept, 'Teach a child,' &c., and the promise, 'when he is old he shall not depart from it.' The precept is, teach a child the trade, or catechise a child in the way that he should go;[3] the Hebrew reads it, teach a child at his mouth, that is, as nurses feed infants with the breast or spoon, at the mouth, so teach them by putting words into their mouths, instructing them, and thereby enabling them to give an account of the principles of the oracles of God.[4] There are many express commands for this, Deut. iv. 9, xi. 19, and vi. 7, 'And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children:' thou shalt whet them[5] as one would set an edge upon a knife, by often going over the whetstone; or, thou shalt sharpen them, *Shanan, acuere, Hebr.*,[6] as a man sharpeneth a stake, by cutting many slivers off when he would drive it into the ground; so the same fundamental truths of religion must be frequently repeated to, and inculcated on thy children. The water of life must be every day dropping into those narrow-mouthed glasses, line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

[1] Deus in solatium naturæ largiebatur primis sæculis ut nullus filius moreretur ante patrem, donec in supplicium idolatriæ, Terah Pater Abraham primus punitus est morte filii, adhuc vivens.—*Epip.*, lib. i., *cont. Hær.*

[2] It is said of Aristippus, that famous philosopher, that he was μητριδίδακτος, taught of his mother.

[3] Præter publicam doctrinam etiam privata catechizatio vigere debet inter nos ex Dei mandato.—*Par. in Gen.* xviii. 19.

[4] *Vide* more of this in the first part.

[5] '*Whet them*,' that is, often, earnestly, and diligently teach them, that they may pierce the hearts of thy children to understand and affect them.—*Ainsw. in Deut.* vi. 7.

[6] *Shanan, acuere* est metaphora ducta a gladio qui dum acuitur sæpius impellitur ad cotem.—*A Lapid.*

These young plants must be often watered.[1] When physicians meet with bodies very corrupt, and yet very weak, they prescribe little and often. There were in the primitive times two sorts of catechumeni, or persons instructed in the principles of religion: 1. Some that were *adulti*, of ripe years, as heathens converted from dumb idols to the true God. These, before they were received by baptism into the fellowship of Christ, were taught and catechised in the way and will of God. So Austin, according to ecclesiastical history,[2] and the eunuch and Cornelius, according to divine writ. 2. Others that were infants, the children of believers, being baptized in their infancy, as they grew up were taught the meaning of baptism, of the covenant of grace, of which that was a sign and seal, &c. Of all which particulars when they could give a good account in their own persons in public before the congregation, and could make a profession of their faith, and would promise obedience to the Lord and his word, they were confirmed, by laying on of hands, saith learned Deodat. on Heb. vi. 2.[3]

It is thy privilege, reader, that thy young ones may be taught to know the Ancient of days. Do not, therefore, omit the duty, but follow that pious pattern of David: 'I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live,' Prov. iv. 3, 4. The mother also minded the instruction of her son, as well as the father, Prov. xxxi. 1–4. As both parents have a share in their children's pollution, so both must endeavour their children's conversion.

The promise is, 'And he shall not depart from it when he is old.' The cloth that is dyed in the wool will keep colour best. Disciples in youth will prove angels in age. Use and experience strengthen and confirm in any art or science. The longer thy child hath been brought up in Christ's school, the more able he will be to find out Satan's wiles and fallacies, and to avoid them. The longer he hath been at the trade, the more skill and delight will he have in wor-

[1] Quintilian's orator must, when he is two years old and after, be accustomed to the best and purest words pronounced to him by his nurse.

[2] Just. Martyr., Apol. ii. Jerom. ad Pamach. Socrates.

[3] Some I know refer that ceremony of laying on of hands, Heb. vi. 2, to baptism, for a sign of blessing and consecration to God, but it may full as probably be admitted to confirmation after baptism, for the pastor did not only examine those whom he confirmed concerning their progress in Christianity, but also pray for them, that God would give them more grace, and continue them in the faith, in which duty he laid his hands on them. Others understand by it the ministry of the word, because on ministers there was imposition of hands.—*August. lib de fide et operibus*, cap. 11.

shipping and enjoying the blessed God. The tree when it is old stands strongly against the wind, just as it was set when it was young.

The children of Merindal so answered one another in the matters of religion, before the persecuting Bishop of Cavailon, that a stander-by said unto the bishop, I must needs confess I have often been at the disputations of the doctors in the Sorbonne, but I never learned so much as by these children. Seven children at one time suffered martyrdom with Symphorisa, a godly matron, their mother. Such a blessing doth often accompany religious breeding; therefore, Julian the apostate, to hinder the growth and increase of Christianity, would not suffer children to be taught either human or divine learning.[1]

Philip was glad that Alexander was born whilst Aristotle lived, that he might be instructed by Aristotle in philosophy. It is no mean mercy that thy children are born in the days of the gospel, and in a valley of vision, a land of light, where they may be instructed in Christianity. Oh do not fail, therefore, to acquaint thy children with the nature of God, the natures and offices of Christ, their own natural sinfulness and misery, the way and means of their recovery, the end and errand for which they were sent into the world, the necessity of regeneration and a holy life, if ever they would escape eternal death! Alas! how is it possible they should ever arrive at heaven if they know not the way thither?

The inhabitants of Mytilene, sometimes the lords of the seas, if any of their neighbours revolted, did inflict this punishment. They forbade them to instruct their children, esteeming this a sufficient revenge.—(*Ælian.*) Reader, if thou art careless of this duty, I would ask thee what wrong thy children have done thee, that thou shouldst revenge thyself by denying them that which is their due—I mean pious instruction.

The Jewish rabbis[2] speak of a very strict custom and method for the instruction of their children, according to their age and capacity. At five years old they were *filii legis*, sons of the law, to read it. At thirteen they were *filii præcepti*, sons of the precept, to understand the law. At fifteen they were *Talmudistæ*, and went to deeper points of the law, even to Talmudic doubts. As thy

[1] Aul. Gel. Ne Christianorum pueri Græcis disciplinis imbuerentur aut scholas publicas frequentarent, lege cavit, Ne linguis eorum, inquit, acumine perpolitis, facile disputationibus nostris resistere, et sacra quidem sua edificare, et amplificare religionem, autem nostram facile refellere queant.—*Nicephor*, lib. x. cap. 25.

[2] Rayn. Mart. de Rep. Heb.

children grow up, so do thou go on to instruct them in God's will. They are 'born like the wild ass's colt,' Job xi. 12—that is, unruly, foolish, and ignorant. We often call a fool an ass, but here it is a 'wild ass,' which is more silly and untractable than a tame one; nay, it is a 'wild ass's colt,' which is most rude, unruly, and foolish. How then shall thy ignorant children come to know God or themselves without instruction?

3. Thy duty is to acquaint thy children with the works of God. Teach them his doings as well as his sayings, 'Take heed to thyself, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons,' Deut. iv. 9. God's wonders should be had in everlasting remembrance. 'He hath done his mighty works to be remembered,' Ps. cxi. 4. Now one special way to do this is by writing them in our children's memories, hereby they are transmitted to posterity. This was the godly practice of the patriarchs, to instruct their children concerning the creation of the world, transgression of man, destruction of the old world, God's providence, the Messiah to be revealed, and the like.[1] The parents' mouths were large books in which their children did read the noble acts of the Lord, 'I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them unto their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments,' Ps. lxxviii. 2–7.[2] This precept is here urged upon a double ground, partly for God's praise, in the perpetuity of his worthy deeds: his works are of great weight, and therefore as curious pictures or precious jewels must in memory of him be bequeathed from father to son whilst the world continueth. If they are written in paper or parchment, they may perish, (and is it not a thousand pities that such excellent records should be lost?) but if they be written by fathers successively in their children's hearts, no time

[1] Willet in Gen. xviii. 9, ex Perer.

[2] Hoc igitur est decretum ut patres legis doctrina imbuti, quasi ex ore Dei, filiis commemorent, se non modo semel fuisse redemptos, sed collectos in unum ecclesiæ corpus, ut Deum liberatorem sancte pureque omnibus seculis colerent.—*Calv. in Ps.* lxxviii. So Ps. xliv. 1, 2.

shall blot or wear them out, Exod. xii. 26, 27. Therefore, as the rabbis[1] observe, the night before the passover, the Jews (to keep God's mercies in memory to his honour) were wont to confer with their children on this wise: The child said, Why is it called the passover? The father said, Because the angel passed over us when it slew the Egyptians, and destroyed us not. The child said, Why do we eat unleavened bread? The father answered, Because we were forced to hasten out of Egypt. The child said, Why do we eat sour grapes? The father answered, To mind us of our afflictions in Egypt. Partly for their own profit, ver. 7: 'That they might set their hope in God,' &c. Acquaintance with God's favour will encourage their faith; knowledge of his power will help them to believe his promise. Reader, obedience to this precept may tend much to thy own and thy children's profit. By teaching thy children God's actions, thou wilt fix them the faster, and they will make the greater impression upon thy own spirit. A frequent mention of things is the best art of memory: what the mouth preacheth often, the mind will ponder much. Besides, it may work for thy children's weal; the more they be acquainted with the goodness, wisdom, power, and faithfulness of God, which appear in his works, the more they will fear, love, and trust him. When David had acquainted his son Solomon how kind and bountiful Barzillai had been to him in his extremity, what respect did Solomon shew to his son (the father being then incapable of his kindness) for the father's sake! If thou acquaintest thy children with national mercies, (how he bestowed the gospel on England when it was the throne of Satan, and worshipped that prince of darkness; how he restored the gospel to England when it was overspread with popery; how wonderfully he hath wrought for the good of his church in England against their enemies; how he blew up them that would have blown up the king and parliament in the gunpowder treason; and how he sunk them in 1588 as lead in the midst of the mighty waters who came against us, &c.,) and also makest known to thy children personal mercies; how at such a time when thou wast in misery, and no human hand could help thee, then thou criedst to God, and he heard and helped thee; how at such a time thou wast in danger, and God was thy deliverer; thou wast in wants and he supplied thee, and delivered thy soul out of all adversity: the recital of these favours to them would be an engagement to them, (as they were sharers in thy mercies,) and an encouragement to them to hope and depend on, to worship and honour so gracious

[1] Joh. Men. de Repub. Hebr.

a God as this God is. 'Our fathers trusted in thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not ashamed,' Ps. xxii. 4, 5. This was an argument with the children to rely on the same rock, and expect shelter from the same refuge.

4. Thy duty is to pray earnestly to God for them.[1] The parents, when Christ was on earth, brought their little ones to him, that he would put his hands on them, Mat. xix. 13; that is, that he would bless them, for laying on the hands was the accustomed ceremony in blessing any; as we read, Gen. xxvii. 21, 22. And in answer to the desire of these pious mothers, he put his hands on them and blessed them, Mark x. 16. So do thou by prayer carry thy children to the blessed Jesus in the arms of faith,—he hath as tender a respect for children now as he had then,—and beseech him to bless them. Thou knowest that by nature they are cursed, liable to the curse of the law, and to the wrath of the Lord; how earnest, how fervent shouldst thou be with the holy child Jesus, that he would lay his hands upon them and bless them![2] How pathetically did Abraham plead with God for Ishmael, 'Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!' Gen. xvii. 18. How affectionately shouldst thou, who knowest thy children are naturally dead, and believest that if they be not born again, they must die eternally, cry to God for them. 'Oh that my sons might live before the Lord, that my daughters might not die for ever! Thou art the prince and Lord of life; oh speak powerfully by the Spirit to their poor souls, that these sons and daughters, dead in sins and trespasses, may hear thy voice and live.'

The poet observeth of the tiger, the most cruel of all beasts, that if she be robbed of her whelps, she lieth down in her den, sadly lamenting their loss, and licking the place where they had lain.

'Sic aspera tigris,
Fœtibus abreptis Scythico deserta sub Antro
Accubat, et tepidi lambit vestigia lecti.'[3]

Reader, wilt thou be more cruel than the savage tiger? canst thou see the devil robbing thee of thy tender babes, and dragging them before thine eyes to his dismal den, and never lament their loss, nor pour out a prayer to God for their recovery? Rachel wept for her dead children, (though their bodies were only butchered

[1] Ciceroni degenerem esse filium constat, et sapiens ille Socrates liberos habuit matri similiores quam patri.—*Senec.*

[2] Impositio manuum, symbolum fuit apud judæos familiare, quoties solennis erat precatio vel benedictio.—*Beza in Mat.* xix.

[3] Stat. Theb., lib. x.

by Herod;) and hast thou never a tear for thy children dead to God, and dead in law, when their souls are like to be murdered by bloody Satan?

Some parents, indeed, instead of blessing, curse their children; but let them take heed lest God hear them, and take them at their word. Manlius (*Loc. commun.* 228) gives us such patterns as may make all such parents to tremble. There was a mother who would usually say, the devil take her daughter; I saw, saith he, this woman leading about her daughter possessed by the devil, and so did Luther and others see her. There was, saith he, an old man that bid his son do something, and the son not hastening, the father wished he might never stir from that place. God said Amen to it; and whilst he lived, which was seven years, he never stirred from that place, but there he stood leaning upon a desk, whilst he slept and ate very little. The prints of his feet are to be seen in the pavement in the town of Friburg in Misnia to this day, saith my author.

O friend, thy prayers are part of thy children's best portion; be therefore more careful to lay up for them a stock of prayers in heaven than to leave them a stock of goods on earth. Job sent and sanctified his children; that is, say some, he sent to them to prepare themselves for the sacrifice. Others say, he put up prayers to God to sanctify them. It is clear, 'he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all,' Job i. 5. He poured out prayers for the acceptance of every child in particular. Job's children were saints, for he saith, 'It may be they have sinned.' His question makes it unquestionable that they did *patrizare* (take after their father) in piety, yet his suspicion put him upon earnest supplication to God for pardon; what petitions shouldst thou then put up, when probably thy children are openly profane! It may be thy case is somewhat like his in the Gospel, 'There came to Jesus a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic and sore vexed; for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water, and I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him,' Mat. xvii. 15. Thou mayest cry to Christ, 'Lord, my son is strangely possessed with the evil spirit; he falleth sometimes into swearing, sometimes into lying, sometimes into the fire of lust, ofttimes into the water of drunkenness, and I have used all other means which thou hast prescribed. I have acquainted him with the heinous nature of sin, with the grievous danger of his soul; I have instructed him frequently, reproved him sharply; I have commanded him solemnly

to turn over a new leaf, and lead a new life. I have brought him to public and private ordinances, have got my friends to deal seriously with him about his eternal concernments, but they could not cure him. Lord, have mercy on my son; Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on him. Do thou speak the word of command, and he will come to himself, and this unclean spirit will depart from him.'

If thou art a mother, do as the woman of Canaan did. 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' If he seem not to hear, and to be silent, (as he was to her,) go nearer to him by faith, and cry, 'Lord, help me; Lord, help me.' If his answer seem to be a repulse, do not desist, but gather arguments from his denial, (as she did,) and conclude that if he open his mouth, he will open his hand; if importunity prevail with an unrighteous man, then much more with a gracious God. Never leave him, till by his own strength thou hast overcome him. At last thou mayest hear, 'O woman, be it unto thee as thou wilt; and see, thy daughter made whole from that very hour,' Mat. xv. 22–29.

5. Thy duty is to reprove and correct thy children as need shall require. It is said of the ape, that she kills her young ones with culling them. Austin, upon a dreadful accident, called his people together to a sermon, and told them this story: Our noble Cyrillus, a man mighty among us in word and deed, had, as you know, but one only son, and he loved him immeasurably, even above God, and let him, without correction, do what he would. Now this very day, this cockering hath in his drunken humour offered violence to his mother, killed his father, wounded mortally two of his sisters, and would have ravished another.[1] Some parents kill their children with kindness, with fondness, which is cruelty to purpose, I would say. Witness David in his carriage or dotage towards Absalom and Adonijah. True affection will be known by seasonable and suitable correction. 'He that spareth his rod hateth his son; he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes, Prov. xiii. 24. Some children have been killed with overlaying. Many a mother hath overlaid and pressed her child to death with fondness. True love, though it be inconsistent with hatred, yet it is not with anger. God himself, who is infinite in affection to his people, makes them often feel the effects of his indignation. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' Prov. iii. 12. Nay, none love their children's souls so much, as they that are most angry at their sins. As they are most loving parents that rather apply

[1] August. ad frat. Erem, Serm. 33.

sharp and painful corrosives than suffer wounds to fester and destroy their children's temporal lives; so they are the most loving parents that apply cutting reprehensions, and, if need be, corrections, rather than to suffer their spiritual diseases to continue and deprive them of eternal life.

'Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight to thy soul,' Prov. xxix. 17. Those that neglected to scourge their children, have found their children to scourge them. Such children, instead of giving rest, have been a sharp rod to their parents. As Eli's children, who were reproved too late, and then but very little, they pierced his heart for his not punishing them.[1] God often whips the fathers by those children that were unwhipped at first. It is said of Muleasses, king of Tunis, that he cockered his son Amida so long, till he rebelled at last against his father, and in a short space deprived him both of his sight and sovereignty.[2] Not to cross our children, is a speedy way to be crossed by them. But as dust is beaten out of beds or chairs with a stick, so is folly beaten out of a child's heart with a rod: 'The rod and reproof give wisdom,' Prov. xxix. 15. Parents in their qualities should resemble honey, though it be sweet to the taste, yet nothing is more sharp when it meets with an exulcerate sore.

Notwithstanding this, both reproof and the rod must be managed by reason.[3] It is good when a father, in relation to his child, makes not rage, but Scripture and reason the rule of his actions. If a governor of a family lay the reins upon the necks of his unruly passions, he will endanger the overthrow of his chariot, and all the persons that ride in it.

As some men are all fondness, and err in the excess; so others are all fire, and err in the defect: thy wisdom, Christian, is to walk in the middle way between both; as not to suffer thy children in sin, lest they be destroyed; so not to provoke them to wrath, lest they be discouraged. Grace will teach thee, though not to extirpate, yet to regulate thy natural affections; for the passions of the soul are like winds to a ship, which being moderate, carry safely to its harbour, but being tempestuous drown it.[4] If thy anger, like fire, be not kept within its bounds, it will quickly consume all thy hopes of success in correction. A furious father many times finds his anger as fire to clay, to harden his son, and make him

[1] Willet on Sam. [2] Turk. Hist.

[3] Metus haud diuturni magister officii.—*Cicer.*

[4] In castigandis moribus lenitate sanandi potius liberi, quam austeritate exasperandi.—*Polan. Synt.* lib. x. cap. 37.

less pliable. Reprehensions and corrections must both be with moderation.[1]

It was the speech of a heathen to one: *Cœderem te nisi irascerer;* I would beat thee if I were not angry. It is not good fighting when men are furious; for such, drunk with passion, stagger in their strokes, and cannot hit right. Oh let prudence, not passion, be thy guide in this. Hasty, sudden showers lay the corn, when mild, gentle ones do much refresh it. Consider the disposition of thy children; some will be won with stroking, then it is needless to strike; God doth not afflict willingly, neither should men, but in case of necessity. Some will be reformed with a frown, then it is to no purpose to fight. What wise man would make his whole body sweat, at that which he may do with a glance of his eye? Dull and stubborn horses want a whip, but meek sheep must be driven gently. How many, when they have overdone, have undone all! No physician, unless mad, will prescribe the same potions to all bodies. Consider also their faults; if small, the lesser; if great, the sorer must the reproof or correction be; for gentle maladies, a gentle medicine will serve; but where the disease is dangerous there must be stronger physic.[2] If the distemper be habituated in the body, the fault be committed frequently, then weak lenitives, ordinary chidings, will be ineffectual. In all the bitter compositions to cure soul-infirmities let love be one ingredient, and appear to be so predominant as to give a relish to the rest. When we put a little sugar into our vinegar, it makes the sauce more grateful to the appetite. But be sure, where the crime is a sin, not to omit this duty, lest God take his sword to kill, as in the case of Eli, because thou wilt not take the rod to correct.

6. The duty of parents is to set a good pattern before their children. It is the saying of Lunbard, The instruction of words is not so powerful as the exhortation of works. Do thou live exactly as thou desirest thy children should do; take heed lest thou set them an ill copy. It is ordinary for children to follow their fathers, though it be to the unquenchable fire. It is the expression of Polanus, (on Ps. viii. 2,) Woe, woe to those parents who make their children, whom God would have witnesses of his purity and perfections, to be witnesses of their impiety and abominations. Nero would say to his wife, Some monstrous birth must be expected from such monsters as we are; if the root be a crab-stock, the fruit will be sour. What is the reason there are so many

[1] In filios pater obtinet non tyrannicum imperium sed basilicum.—*Davenant in Col.* iii.

[2] Ιατρεία ἡ παίδεια.—*Arist.*

drunkards, swearers, atheists, and scoffers at godliness? truly their parents were such before them; and as Austin observes, it is the general cry, *Nolumus esse meliores quam patres;* we will be no better than our fathers:[1] therefore be sure that thou who art a father be holy, teach thy children to pray and read, and deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts by thy example. Aristotle tells us that the old nightingale teacheth the young one to sing by singing unto her.

I have read of a child that when his vicious father checked him for some fault, telling him never parent had such a wicked child, answered, Yes, sir, my grandfather had. It is true his words savour more of wit than grace; but pare off what is rotten, and the remainder of the fruit may be profitable. Children will observe their fathers' courses and carriage, and sooner follow their poisonous patterns, than their pious precepts. It is said the most of fishes' eggs are devoured by their males, and so they perish.[2] Many a parent destroyeth his child by a vicious example. 'This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approveth of their sayings,' Ps. xlix. 13. Justin Martyr inquires into the reason why the prophet Elisha called for vengeance upon the children that mocked him, 2 Kings ii. 23, 24, when they hardly understood what they did, much less did design evil to him; and answers it, that the children learned that language from their parents, therefore God sent that judgment to punish both children and parents. They that are heirs to their fathers' moral evils, God makes to inherit their penal evils.[3]

Scandal in a parent, like leaven, will sour the whole lump of his family. Sometimes children take after their fathers in natural, but often in spiritual diseases. The children gather wood, when the fathers will kindle the fire, and the mothers knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven. 'Their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills,' Jer. vii. 18, and xvii. 2. Thy child may forget thy precepts, but he will be prone to remember thy profaneness. The king of Morocco, when he read Paul's epistles, did much commend them, but said, every one is bound to worship the same God which his father did. Because children are so apt to follow the example of their fathers, therefore Lycurgus commanded the citizens to dine and sup in a

[1] Nihil in te et in patre videat quod si fecerit pœnitebit.—*Hier. ad Læt.*

[2] τὰ πολλα ὠα οἱ ἀρρενες ἀνακαπτουσι.—*Arist. Hist.*, 6, cap. 14.

[3] Voces ipsas pueri à parentibus edocti erant, quare puerorum clade parentes flagellarit. Illud enim, Ascende Calve, proscindendi per detractionem Eliæ assumptionis gratia proferebant *q. d.* Abripiat te quoque spiritus, ut itidem à te liberemur.—*Just. Mar.* q. 8.

common hall, whither their children did also resort, to learn temperance and gravity, and where they heard not unseemly language, but serious and wise discourse.

Secondly, I shall speak to this duty in relation to the bodies and temporal estates of thy children.

In this respect there is one thing that concerneth the mother of the child, and other things that concern both parents, though chiefly the father.

That which concerneth the mother is to nurse her child. Sarah was a noble lady, yet she was a nurse, Gen. xxi. 7. They are monstrous mothers who nourish their children in the womb, but scorn to do it when they are come into the world. Indeed want of milk or weakness may excuse a mother—God doth not require it of any in such a case—but where he gives ability and strength, he expecteth the performance of this duty; for why should God fill the mother's breasts against the child's birth, if not for this, that the child might suck the bottles of milk when it was born? Not niceness, but necessity, can excuse from this duty.[1]

Besides, it is a great wrong oftentimes to the children; for as plants follow the nature of the ground that feedeth them, and cattle of the dams that suckle them—some naturalists tell us a lamb sucking a goat changeth her fleece—so children too often follow the naughty conditions of their nurses. If therefore thy child must be put out, endeavour to get a good one. This reason is given why Alcibiades was so stout, though an Athenian, when that people naturally are fearful, because a woman of Sparta, a valiant, warlike nation, was his nurse. But I would wish all women that are able —nay, God himself commandeth them—to bring up their own children, 1 Tim. v. 10.

It is said of the cuckoo that she doth not build her nest herself, but *τίκτει ἐν ἀλλοτρίαις νεοττίαις*, layeth her eggs in other birds' nests, which hatch it up as their own[2]—hence they are called cuckolds who bring up the adulterous seed of others. And Julius Scaliger reporteth of a certain bird, of the bigness of a hen, in Catigan, an island in the sea, which never sitteth on her eggs, but burieth them two feet deep in the sand, to be hatched by the sun. Mothers who vaunt out of pride, refuse to bring up their babes, are like such brutes, but worse than others; for most beasts will give the young their breasts. Women see before their eyes how willing brutes are to suckle their young, and yet our dainty dames, forsooth, for fear of disturbing their rest, and because their gaudy garments

[1] Calvin in Gen.

[2] Arist. Hist., ix. cap. 29.

would be often disordered, are more cruel than the sea-monsters, and deny their breasts to the children of their own bodies, Lam. iv. 3.

The duties which concern both, though chiefly the father, are these following.

1. To provide for them. Parents who take no care to feed and clothe their children, are like those heathen whom the apostle describeth to be without natural affection, Rom. i. 32. He that provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel, and hath denied the faith, 1 Tim. v. 8. Such a person is worse than a heathen; he is so far from grace, that he hath put off nature and humanity. Beasts and birds are tender of their young; they will —at least some of them—famish themselves to feed their young: how will they encounter with them that are much stronger, for the preservation of their young! The naturalist telleth us that the eagle—a fit emblem of a Christian father—abideth ἐν τόποις ὑψηλοῖς, in high places, because there her young are safest from dangers, and that though she casteth them out of her nest when they are able to fly, yet till then she doth feed and cherish them.[1] And the same author[2] saith of some fishes that they will by no means leave their young spawn, but carefully accompany them to keep them from hurt. The very bitch will be tender of her whelps. The very crocodile is so careful of her young, that she layeth her eggs whither Nilus cannot come.[3] Men from other creatures may learn these lessons and lectures, for indeed they are plainly written in the law of nature. The bees are industrious abroad, sucking from the sweet flowers of the fields, and then carry what they get home to their young, nay, they put their food into their mouths as oft as they need it.—*Theat. of Polit., Flying Insects.*

Educate them according to, but not beyond, thy ability; let them not want necessaries, but take heed of delicacies. Too high breeding is sin's brooding, and too too often hatcheth pride, contempt, and disobedience to parents. Thou mayest lift them up to cast thee down, which beware of, if thou lovest either thyself or child. The Scripture will not suffer fathers to provoke their children to wrath, much less to expose them to ruin.[4]

The Thebans made a law, that those parents should be put to

[1] Arist. Hist. de Ani., lib. ix. cap. 32. [2] Lib. iv. cap. 8, a Tostat., qu. 46.

[3] Cum bestiæ videantur habere nescio quid στοργῆς naturalis, dum se mutuo curant, qui illius est expers est bestiis deterior.—*Fajus.*

[4] Utinam liberorum nostrorum mores non ipsi perderemus. Infantiam statim deliciis solvimus, mollis illa educatio, quam indulgentiam vocamus, nervos omnes et mentis et corporis frangit. Quid non adultus concupiscet qui in purpuris repit?—*Quintil.*, lib. i. cap. 2.

death who were so unnatural as to cast out and expose their children to ruin;[1] and yet, alas! how many spend that in an alehouse which should keep their families, and, whilst they are wasting prodigally, their children want necessaries. Such men sin abroad and at home at the same time, and drink in their cups the very blood of their babes! Oh inhuman cruelty! But, reader, there is one thing of weight which I must not omit. As thy duty is to provide for them food and raiment, so also to bring them up to learning.[2] Some for want of reading their neck-verse have lost their lives; but ah, how many for want of reading have lost their precious souls! The poor heathen, the Brahmins in India, (saith Alex. ab Alex.,) so soon as their children were capable of instruction, placed them forth to good schoolmasters, that by them they might be instructed in learning and good manners. If heathen were so mindful of giving their children learning for their temporal good, surely Christians should not be forgetful of it, when it relates so much to their children's eternal good. He that is but affected as he ought to be, with the gross ignorance of hundreds in the nation, by reason of which profaneness rageth in their lives, and atheism reigneth in their hearts and houses, and their souls are every hour next door to the eternal fire, and all because, as they tell us, they were never book-learned, they could never read, needs not arguments to move him to let his children learn to read.

It may be, reader, thou wilt tell me thou art poor, and canst not be at the charge. I ask thee, first, Dost thou not spend more money in a week vainly than would pay for thy child's schooling a week? Secondly, Canst thou not read thyself, nor none in thy family? if thou canst, or others in thy house, time may be found morning or evening, or on wet days, when thou canst not work, or on Lord's days, to teach them. Thirdly, Is there never a neighbour or gentleman in the country so merciful whom thou canst prevail with to give six or eight pence a-week to keep three or four of thy children at school? I tell thee, didst thou but know of what concernment reading is to the soul of thy child, thou wouldst rather beg of every person in thy parish, and the next too, rather than to let them go without it.

But, reader, if God hath given thee an estate, let me beseech thee,

[1] Ælian. Var. Hist., lib. ii. cap. 7.

[2] Pharaoh's daughter trained Moses in all the learning of the Egyptians. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Constantine procured three several tutors for his three sons, the first for divinity, the second for the civil law, the third for military discipline.—*Euseb.*

for the Lord's sake, for their souls' sake, who cannot speak for themselves, to be really helpful to the poor in this particular. Alas! the people perish for want of knowledge. And how can they know God's will that cannot read it? Send abroad among thy neighbours, inquire who are poor and cannot, and who are profane and will not, bring up their children to reading; pity and supply the former, provoke the latter by shaming them or awing them, if thou hast authority. A little laid out this way, a little labour, a little money, may bring thee in great joy at the great day.

Secondly, To bring them up to some calling, that they may be serviceable to their country. Though their general calling must be chiefly regarded, yet their particular calling must not be neglected; nay, the latter will be a help to the former. They who are brought up to no trade are usually brought up to Satan's black art; idle young men are loose, and so at leisure to be taken into the devil's service. A lawful calling hinders the commission of many a sin, and prevents many a temptation. Standing pools do quickly putrify. If the sea did not purge itself by continual motion, it would corrupt the air. The air, if it were not moved to and fro by the winds, would infect the inhabitants. Idleness breeds all manner of wickedness. He that is very busy at his calling doth not hear when wicked companions would entice him to folly. The idle vagrant indeed is full of vermin, of sin, is carted from constable to constable, and, after many a whipping by the way, is at last lodged in hell, his own place. How many have been carried from the jail to the gallows, and from thence, it is to be feared, to the unquenchable fire, who have acknowledged the main cause to be the want of a calling.

Thy children ought to be serviceable to the state as well as to the church. It was a notable speech of that Roman worthy, Aulus Fulvius, to his son, after he had discovered him to be one in Cataline's conspiracy, *Ego patriæ te genui, non Catilinæ*,[1]—I begat thee for thy country, not for Cataline; I intended thee to defend, not to destroy, the commonwealth in which thou wast born. The Horatii and Curiatii, by their valour and virtue, were bulwarks to the commonwealth. Theodosius finds out Arsenius to be his sons' schoolmaster, that they might, by learning the arts and sciences, be beneficial to the empire. Nothing is created for itself, but so placed by the most wise providence that it may confer somewhat towards the public good. Look to the heavens, to the ocean, on the earth, and the several creatures in them, and see how all are some way or other helpful for the universal benefit.

[1] Valer. Max., lib. v. cap. 1.

Adam brought up Cain to be a husbandman, and Abel to be a shepherd. The ancient Jews were very careful that all their children should be trained up in some calling. It is a witty observation which one hath—Jabal, that dwelt in tents, and tended herds, had Jubal to his brother, the father of music, to shew that a lawful calling and true comfort are companions, and often meet together. The industrious bee gets much honey. Some children neglect their ancient parents, and give this as the ground, they brought them up to nothing. Though the father's sin will not justify this son, yet, without question, it is a very great crime to leave a child without a calling. Idle persons are oft like unworn garments, eaten up with the moths of vices. Pride makes some parents bring up their children to profaneness; they breed them to nothing, and thereby breed them to all things that are evil. The Spanish story is turned into English. A Spanish woman went a-begging from door to door with three children, was met and pitied by a French merchant, and he offered to take the eldest of her boys into his service, but she proudly, though poor, scorned it, saying, that for aught she knew her son might live to be king of Spain.

Some parents train up their children altogether to play. 'They send forth their little ones like a flock,' as Job describes wicked parents, 'and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ,' Job xxi. 11, 12. Instead of teaching their children some art or trade, they train them up to artificial dancing, as Herodias was; to trip neatly with their toes to allure others to wickedness. Though all dancing be not sinful, yet to bring up children to little else is unlawful. Music is commendable and melodious, yet for children to be brought up to nothing but dancing, singing, and music, is abominable, and will sound ill in God's ears.[1]

But, reader, take heed what master thou providest for thy son, lest thou helpest him to one that may help him to hell. Let thine eye be more on a godly than on a wealthy master; even such an one as will mind not only his temporal, but also his eternal welfare. Possibly thou mayest bind thyself to be the devil's apprentice when thou little thinkest it. *Qualis herus, talis servus*,—Like master, like man. Thy child may be sooner taught to imitate his wicked ways than to sell his wares; and what an ill bargain dost thou make to give money to a master to bring up thy son for Satan! It is commonly said of Newgate, that if a man be not a rogue be-

[1] Musicam et honestam voluptatem non damnat Scriptura, sed eorum damnat securitatem qui his velut inebrietati Deum contemnunt.—*Mercer, in loc.*

fore he goes in, he shall be sure to be made one before he comes out. It is too true of many families, if a servant be not vicious before he lives in them, he shall be sure to be made so before he leaves them. Their houses are like the English marshes, those that carry health into them shall hardly, if they continue there any time, come away without sickness. If thy child be bad, such a master will make him worse. Young persons are very prone to imitate their masters' evil practices, and much apter to follow them to the tavern than to the temple. When the master is one that blasphemeth God, it is seldom that the servant blesseth God; it is as usual for servants to put on their masters' sins as their old clothes. But suppose thy child be religious and hopeful, shouldst thou therefore thrust him into the midst of temptations? Because thy child is probably of a good constitution, therefore thou wilt put him to dwell in a pest-house. Is this rational? The more hope thou hast that thy trees live, the more care thou hast to keep off cattle that may crop and kill them. Thou oughtest to be very tender of the first sproutings of grace, lest they be nipped in the bud. Alas! how oft hath a great light of profession been blown out (leaving a stench behind it) with the high wind of temptation! Thou art wholly a stranger in the world, if thou dost not know that evil company is a quench-coal to Christianity. It cannot be supposed that thy child, being young, is much rooted, and then how likely may every blast shake him, and by degrees overturn him! When thou hast lived seven years in Ethiopia and not changed thy countenance, nor proclaimed to thy friends by thy colour in what country thou hast been, then bind thy child to one of Satan's servants, that useth to cheat and cozen, to curse and swear, that hath banished God and Christ, prayer and Scripture, out of his family, and expect that he should be returned to thee at the seven years as spotless and blameless as he went from thee.

I think it not amiss to advertise the reader in the choice of a calling to have some respect to thy child's disposition; none are so excellent at any art or science as they that delight most in it. All creatures thrive best when they are in their own elements, because there they delight most. It is therefore commended for an ingenious policy of the Athenians, that before they placed out their children to any settled course of life, they brought them into a room furnished for that end, with all sorts of tools or instruments for callings, and narrowly observing with what there they were most delighted, bred them up accordingly.

Thy piety must help thee to choose a fit master, and thy pru-

dence to choose a fit calling; but do not by no means omit the duty, lest thou do undo thy child both here and hereafter. Let them labour here, that they may rest hereafter; as thou wouldst prevent their present riot and future ruin, employ them. When bees rob their neighbour hives, a special way to divert them, and cause them to desist, is by setting them at work at home, by running a penknife through the hive, and so, opening their combs, let out their honey, which they will seek presently to stop up again, and let their neighbours' alone.

Thirdly, To dispose of them in marriage. Parents must endeavour that their children may timely and conveniently be married: 'Take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands,' Jer. xxix. 6. When God's providence affords a fit match, they must not shew averse minds; by denying their consents without cause, some children have been destroyed. Abraham sent his servant to provide a wife for Isaac, Gen. xxiv. It is both thy dignity and duty to take a daughter to thy son, and to give thy son to a daughter. Calvin observeth that a great wrong is offered to the right of parents by the popish canons, which allow of marriages without parents' approbation.[1] Thou hast as great a propriety in thy children as in any of thy possessions; do thou therefore improve this privilege, as may be most for thy comfort and their profit.

But thy main care must be to match thy child rather with one that is good than with one that is great. If thy child be gracious, it will be a grief to live with one that is vicious; if thy child be wicked, he will get little good by one that is as bad, or worse. Health cannot be caught from one that is sound, but a disease may quickly from one that is sick. What communion hath light with darkness? A godly husband will have little help from, or comfort in, an ungodly wife. Why should thy son for a little silver be unequally yoked? I wish that Manoah could speak so loud, saith Bishop Hall, that all our Israelites might hear him. 'Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or amongst all God's people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?'[2] Alas! how sad will it be with thy child to marry one that hath an inheritance on earth, but no estate in the cove-

[1] Calvin in Gen. xxiv.

[2] Cum infideli non est conjugium contrahendum. 1. Quia Deus prohibet, Deut. vii. 3. 2. Quia Deo displicet, Gen. vi. 1. 3. Ut vitentur cultus Dei impedimenta, 1 Kings xvi. 31. 4. Quia flecteret animum ad falsam religionem, 1 Kings xi. 1. 5. Ut desidia absit. 6. Ne liberi a vero Deo abducantur.—*Polan. Syntag.*, lib. x. cap. 53.

nant, to lie so near to one that is far from God! Possibly thy child is but a little warm himself, is but inclining heavenward, now to put him so close to a quench-coal may quickly make him key-cold. Remember, it is the blessing of the Lord, not such a quantity of land, that must make thy child's life happy. Now, how can that blessing be expected when his commands are void and violated? He that grafts into a crab-stock is never like to want verjuice. If thou wouldst have God to meet thy child in mercy, it must not be in a way of sin, but in a way of duty.

Before thou lookest into the world for a wife for thy son, look up to God for his direction. Do not expect God's company at the wedding except he be invited by prayer, and also have a hand in the match. Let piety, not portion, be the first particular thou inquirest after. If yellow angels make up the match, be confident the evil angels will be at the marriage. Good Jehoshaphat gave his son Jehoram to the daughter of Ahab, but how many Benonis, sons of sorrows, were the issue of such a conjunction, 2 Kings viii. 18, 27. Heathen had more sense, I mean several of them, than to suffer money to make their matches.[1] When the rich man in Athens, who had a daughter to bestow, asked counsel of Themistocles how he should dispose her, telling him that there was a very honest man sued to her, but he was very poor, and there was a rich man that desired her, but he was unrighteous. Were it in my choice, saith Themistocles, I would prefer a moneyless man before masterless money. Alas! how often doth their affection wear as their portions waste! And indeed it is impossible that that building should stand long whose foundation is so loose. If riches be the ground of their love, when that oil is consumed the lamp will be extinguished. If outward beauty cause that flame, when a disease or old age hath removed the fuel the fire will go out. But if godliness or spiritual riches be the motive of conjugal love, it will last for ever; for the beauty of grace doth never decay, though the grace of beauty doth; and spiritual riches are durable, and as immortal as any spirits. I do not deny, reader, but it is lawful in the choice of a wife to have some regard to portion and proportion, but it should be after, not before piety. It is wholly sinful to set these in the first place, for then Hagar the servant croweth over Sarah her mistress, which God cannot endure. If, therefore, thou wouldst have thy child's wedding, like that of Cana of Galilee, honoured with Christ's company, let not wealth, nor wit, nor beauty, but grace strike the match.

[1] *Vide* Chrysostomi homiliam duodecimam in Epist. ad Col., *sub finem.*

Fourthly, Thy duty is according to thy ability to portion them. It is true of natural as well as spiritual parents. The parents ought to lay up for the children, and not the children for the parents, 2 Cor. xii. 14. God's providence and thy own diligence will be helpful to thee herein. I must tell thee the fee-simple of thy estate is God's, thou hast at most but a lease for life; and therefore, as those that have estates for lives may not commit waste, so thou mayest not commit spoil, lest thy children be prejudiced. Nay, that God, whose the propriety is in all thou hast, doth himself in his word, under his own hand, give thy children portions out of it; therefore for thee to spend it carelessly, or withhold it covetously, is theft and robbery; God commanded the Jews to give the eldest a double portion. 'The father shall give him a double portion of all he hath, for he is the first of his strength,' Deut. xxi. 17.

There is a story of a father that, being deeply at play at dice, and having lost much money, his son, a little lad, standing by, and observing it, wept. Son, saith the father, why dost thou weep? Sir, said the lad, I have read how great Alexander wept when he heard that his father Philip had gained many countries and kingdoms, fearing that he would leave him nothing to win; and I weep the contrary way, fearing that you will leave me nothing to lose. If we scum off but the froth of the jest, for the son's words imply an itching hand after a shaking elbow, a good use may be made of it. Many a son hath cause to weep, to think how his father hath prodigally wasted his wealth, and left him his heir only to his beggary. The naturalists observe of the bees, that what they get by their industry they do not spend lavishly, but discreetly and orderly dispose it in their waxen cabinets, and as soon as they are full of honey close them fast with a waxen lock, both to prevent robbers, and to necessitate them to further labour as long as the season for gathering continueth. The great philosopher observeth of the eagle, that she is very provident for her young, and layeth up the meat which they leave, lest they should want another time:[1] Prov. xix. 14, 'Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers.' God bestoweth them on the parents, and they bequeath them to their posterity. But it is the duty of parents as well to help their children whilst they live, as to leave their estates to them when they die. They are but hoggish fathers, that are good for nothing till they come to the knife. Why shouldst thou tempt thy child to dissolute courses for a livelihood, or to wish for thy death because

[1] ἀποτίθεται την περιττένουσαν τροφὴν τοῖς νεοττοῖς.—*Arist. Hist.* ix. 32.

thou, like an earthen money-box, though thou takest in much, wilt part with nothing till broken in pieces.

Surely it is no small comfort to parents to see their children live and thrive, through God's blessing, on their portions. But many parents are like the vulture, which is so cruel towards her own birds, that if she see them thrive and grow fat she envieth at it, and beateth them with her wings and claws to make them lean.[1] It is their pain to have their children prosper. They are sick if their children be well. They are afraid those young plants should grow so fast, and spread so fair by their house side as to darken or eclipse their glory. Heathen will condemn such Christians.[2] Other fathers turn their children to the wide world; whether they sink or swim it is all one to them. These deal with their children somewhat like to wolves, of whom it is written that they never see their sire or their young, for the herd of wolves sets upon, and kill that wolf which by the smell they perceive to have coupled with the she-wolf.[3] Reader, let not covetousness make thee careless of thy children. Be sure the portion thou givest thy children be well gotten, otherwise a curse rather than a blessing will accompany it. Such bags have a hole through which all will run before thou art aware. Many parents by their injustice, instead of raising, do ruin their children.

I have somewhere read of a son, who finding after his father's death his heaps of evil-gotten treasure, cried out, O faithful drudge! and quickly wasted his hoard of wealth.[4] Little do unrighteous men imagine, that what was forty years in gathering, comes often to be spent in forty days' revelling. Surely that proverb came from hell—Happy is that child whose father went to the devil. I cannot omit a story which I heard from an unquestionable author, whilst I was writing this chapter. There was an English knight, whom I judge not fit to name, in this present generation, whom God had blessed with a fair estate, but he was greedy by any means, whether good or bad, to increase it. A servant of his, being a bachelor, fell sick, that was worth four or five hundred pound per annum; this person being given over for dead by his physicians, made his will, and gave all his estate to his master;[5] the knight knowing it, seemed exceeding tender of him, and took great care that nothing, either for food or physic, should be wanting to him.

[1] Tost. ex Plin.

[2] Hector to his son: καὶ ποτέ τίς εἴπῃσι πατρὸς δ' ὄγε πόλλον ἀμείνων.—*Homer. Iliad*, vi.

[3] Bodin. in Theatr., lib. iii.

[4] Male parta cito dilabuntur.

[5] De male quæsitis, vix gaudet tertius hæres.

It pleased God, contrary to all expectations, to rebuke the servant's disease, and to give great hopes of his recovery; upon which the knight, fearing that if he lived he might alter his will, as was suspected, gave him poison to ensure his death. But some months after his death, God, who heareth the cry of blood, and by extraordinary ways revealeth it, caused the knight to be questioned for it; upon his trial at the assize, he refused, notwithstanding the arguments and importunity of judge and ministers, to plead, but asked diligently whether he did not by this course save his land, and being told yea, then, saith he, I will be pressed to death, and take notice that my son may ride booted and spurred, in three thousand pound a-year of his own land. With this weak cordial he died, and his son now alive is thought not worth a farthing. Such patterns of God's justice may awaken all parents to a serious consideration what portions they leave their children: they wrong their children. One coarse dish that is wholesome, is better than many dainty ones that have poison with them, but the greatest wrong is to themselves. Alas! how dear a purchase, how hard a bargain, doth he make who buyeth an estate for his son with the loss of his own soul. The greatest fool in the world cannot sell cheaper, or buy dearer.

Thus, reader, I have despatched what I promised concerning the duties of parents. Oh that thou, if called to that relation, wouldst practise them! Little dost thou think what a comfort it would be to thee, if God should so bless thine endeavours that thy children should sit like olive plants, famous for fatness, round about thy table, whilst thy wife is a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house. If thy little ones should give thee good hopes of their present holiness, and their future happiness, certainly, if thou knowest the worth of grace, such a mercy would delight thee more than if thou hadst all the world to give them. It was but a little wind which filled the wealthy Florentine's heart with joy, who, when dying, bespake his children thus: It much rejoiceth me, now I am going to die, *quod vos divities relinquam*, that I shall leave you all rich. But it will be a rich cordial indeed to thee, to be able when dying to tell thy children, I begat you vicious, but this revives me, I leave you all religious.

Plutarch speaks of a Spartan woman, that when her neighbours brought out their fine clothes and diamonds, boasting of their riches, she brought forth her children virtuous and well taught, saying, These are my jewels and my ornaments. Reader, will it not be a wonderful comfort to thee at the last day, when others stand forth

with their children, and all they can say is, We brought them up to trades, or we bred them gentlemen, or we left them great estates; if then thou canst say, Lord, here am I, and the children which thou hast given me. It is true, Lord, I conceived them in sin, and brought them forth in iniquity, but through thy grace I have travailed again with them, and Jesus Christ is formed within them. I brought them to thee many a time in the arms of faith and prayer, and thou didst bless them, and, lo, here they are to bless thee for ever.

A good wish about the duty of a parent, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The education of my children being a business of great consequence, in reference to the honour of the blessed God, and also to their own eternal welfare, which do not a little depend upon their religious nurture, and being a work of large influence, both in relation to the people amongst whom they shall live, and to the posterity yet unborn, which may be poisoned with sin, or provoked to sanctity by their power and patterns, I wish, in general, that I may never be so great a thief as to rob and wrong so many at once; but, considering how richly these small vessels are laden, may not dare to send them to sea amidst those winds, and waves, and sands, and rocks, without their card and compass, but may be the more diligent in the discharge of my duty to steer them aright, by forewarning them of, and forearming them against, those storms and dangers and wrecks to which they are liable, that at last, by the gales of the Spirit, they may arrive with all their precious freight at a happy and glorious port. Lord, let thy blessing so accompany my endeavours in their breedings, that all my sons may be Benaiahs, the Lord's building, and then they will all be Abners, their father's light; and that all my daughters may be Bethias, the Lord's daughters, and then they will all be Abigails, their father's joy.

In particular, I wish that I may not, like Jacob, lay the right hand of my care and industry about the younger son, their bodies, and my left hand upon the elder, their souls, but that my greatest pains may be for their better part; and though I would not injure the cabinet of the outward, yet that my principal study may be for the jewel of their inward man. How unnatural are those parents

that fatten their swine and famish their sons, that toil and moil to dress dead corpses gaudily with flowers, and suffer their living children to die for want of food! More unnatural am I in carking and caring only to enrich their dying flesh when I neglect their immortal spirits. Their bodies are more worth than meat, and their temporal lives than raiments; but ah, how much are their inestimable souls, and their eternal lives worth! Though I cannot be the author to generate grace, yet I may be the instrument to promote it. Religious education is the best portion I can give them living, and the best legacy I can leave them dying. Lord, whilst others are plotting to make their children rich, let my principal design be to make mine religious, that in life they may walk according to thy law, and when death shall turn their vile bodies into rotten carcases, their precious souls may be admitted into thy royal court.

I desire that their original corruption, and their proneness thereby to all actual sins, and liableness to eternal sufferings, may make so deep an impression upon my spirit, that I may be quickened the more vigorously to endeavour their conversion. My infants are not innocents; circumcised Jews begat uncircumcised children. They are estranged from the womb, and as full of wickedness as the ocean is of waters. As Paul's viper was venomous, when being stiff with cold, it could not sting; when my children cannot act sin, even then their natures are infected with sin. How soon may the world catch these young silly birds with its dry chaff! How easily may Satan, like the kite, take and devour these little chickens! Every beast may easily crop and kill these new quicksets. Oh let the sense of their danger make me more serious for their defence, and let my heart be so affected with their blindness, that I may faithfully and skilfully apply the eye-salve of the sanctuary to them, for the recovery of their spiritual sight. If I saw my neighbour's beast falling under his burden, it were my duty to afford it help. My poor children are falling under sin's weight into endless woe, and shall I stand still whilst they drop into hell? Lord, let their matchless misery be ever pressing on me, to be importunate with thee for sanctifying and saving mercy, and let me arise and be doing whatsoever is commanded by thy word, in order to their everlasting weal.

I wish that that, the stream of my love to my little ones, may run in the right channel, I mean chiefly, though not solely, towards their inward men. Nature will teach me to love them much, but grace will teach me to love them well, and to give the precedency to that part within them which is of greatest excellency. How

poorly do I love that child, whose scratched finger I am busy to heal, but in the meantime neglect a wound near his vitals, suffering it to fester and kill him. Surely smaller affection do I shew to those near relations, if whilst I am feeding and physicking their bodies, lest sickness should kill them, I am careless of their souls, permitting, through my falseness, sin to damn them. Lord, let my love to the fruits of my body be like thy love to the travail of thy dear Son's soul. Thou feedest their flesh, but oh, what costly feasts dost thou provide for their spirits! Thou art mindful of their external good, but oh, how solicitous art thou, causing all thy providences and ordinances to work for their spiritual and eternal gain! Thy love to their bodies is like the sun's ordinary beams, refreshing; but thy love to their souls is like its beams united in a glass, burning love. Let me, as a merciful man, be merciful to the beast in them, that their bodies may never famish through my fault; but oh make me more tender of the angel within them, than of the apple of mine own eye, that their souls may never perish through my perverseness. I have read that bears which bring forth deformed whelps have so much love, as to take pains in licking them to a handsomer shape. I bring forth my children defiled with sin, like to Satan, and loathsome to God, and doth it not concern me to bring them up in the admonition of the Lord, and to bring them to him, that he may make them comely through that comeliness which his Spirit can put upon them? If I had hurt a stranger, I should esteem it my duty to be at the cost of his cure; have not I transmitted to my posterity the seeds both of sin and hell, and shall I be careless of their help! Lord, since from me they derive that sin, that sickness which is unto eternal death, make me both faithful and successful in the use of those medicines which thou prescribest for their eternal life.

The time of my children's youth being the most probable to persuade them into piety, I wish that I may by no means let slip this opportunity, but that I may be both prudent and provident to improve it to the utmost, lest by losing this season I lose their souls. Sin, when it first sprouts forth from the root of bitterness, must be nipped in the bud, or blown off in the blossom; if it once ripen into custom it is much more hard to be conquered. Oh let me therefore be sedulous to dash those brats of Babylon against the wall, to kill those poisonous vipers in the egg, and to stop those small streams of unclean water before they swell into a river, and force me to work at the labour in vain. Clay may easily be wrought upon when it comes newly out of the pit, but if once hardened into

brick, it will sooner break than bow. Why should not I take the advantage, when my children are, as metal in the furnace, soft and pliable, of casting them in a holy mould, when experience teacheth me that they soon harden, and then are sooner ruined than reformed? Clothes dyed from their native whiteness will take no colour but a sadder; children altered from their natural comparative simplicity quickly grow to be subtle in sin. Lord, help me so industriously to make use of that price which thou hast put into my hands for their profit, that I may never have cause to repent of my laziness when it is too late to remedy it.

I desire that I may frequently consider that many besides myself have a share in that stock which is committed to my care and charge, that pondering how the glory of the infinite God, the prosperity of church and state, my own peace, and the good of posterity, are all in a great degree embarked in these small bottoms, I may be the more careful to get their hearts ballasted with grace, and instruct them so to have their hands on the stern, and their eyes to the true star, that they may sail steady in the greatest storm, avoid those rocks and sands by which others are ruined, and after all their hazards and hardships, come to enjoy an everlasting calm. The fall of one house hath sometimes murdered many men; the irreligious nurture of one son hath sometimes slain a hundred souls. Ah, who can be indicted at the great assize for such and so many soul-murders without infinite horror? One vessel well set out and managed, and safe coming home, hath enriched many. Lord, make me so true to my great and weighty trust, in which so many have an interest, that my God, my conscience, my country, my children, may all bless me, yea, that the children yet unborn may arise and call me blessed. Enable me so piously and prosperously to sow this new ground with the good seed of thy word, that hereafter from it thou mayest reap a harvest of praise, I of comfort, others of profit, and they themselves of eternal peace.

I wish that I may thankfully accept of that superlative mercy, the covenant of grace, wherein God hath engaged to be a God to me and my posterity, and may testify my high esteem of that honourable privilege, and great respect of that inestimable promise, by offering my children seasonably and solemnly to be partakers of the sign and seal thereof. It is both my dignity and duty to list my children under so great a captain as Jesus Christ, and to engage them in so good a quarrel as the combat with the world, the flesh, and the wicked one. Oh let me never, as some peevish, ungrateful ones, pretend conscience for the omission of such a gra-

cious ordinance, but so sacredly devote them to thy service that they may, through thy strength, for ever be thy loyal and faithful soldiers. My children have the essence of a man, though they cannot do the actions of a man; my children are capable of the habits, though unable to perform the acts, of grace. Lord, thou canst sanctify them from the womb, and cause them to live spiritually as soon as they live naturally. Oh thou that of common clay didst make a precious salve to bestow outward sight, be pleased to make common water instrumental for their welfare. Lord, when I first bind them apprentices to thy Majesty, be thou surety for thy little servants; let thy Spirit so work within them, and thine eye of favour so watch over them, that they may serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives; and when their indentures shall expire, at death be translated into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

I desire that the thoughts of my children's ignorance of God's word, and utter inability thereby of obeying it, may make me the more diligent to acquaint them with his will. Alas! how should they cleanse their (naturally filthy) ways, but by taking heed thereto according to God's word? And how can their lives be answerable to the divine law, if they do not know it? Did ever any desire Christ, that did not know him to be the pearl of price? Did ever any forsake sin, who did not know it to be rank poison? How many millions in the night of ignorance have stumbled into hell! Is not inner darkness the beaten path to utter darkness? Oh that these weighty thoughts might so sink into my spirit, that whilst others are busy in instructing their children how to pursue their pastimes and pleasures, or how to carry themselves in great company, or how they may live a few days comfortably, I may instruct my children how they may please the blessed God, by remembering their Creator in the days of their youth; how they may be interested in the dearest Saviour, and work out their own salvation. David, though a king, would teach Solomon how he should be God's loyal subject; though much business lay on his back, he would yet find time to acquaint him with Christ's light burden. He composed the whole 72d Psalm for the instruction of his son. Bathsheba, a queen, would also as a pious mother read her son, Prov. xxx., a gracious lecture. The Jewish children, some write, could as easily answer to any part of God's law as to their own names. The very heathen Persians,[1] as soon as their children could speak, would have them taught virtue. Idolaters

[1] Xenoph.

teach their children to kiss their images, and to bow down to idols; and shall not I teach my children how to worship the God of their fathers with perfect hearts and willing minds? Lord, help me so to season these new vessels with frequent and plain and seasonable instructions, (strong wine may break weak glasses,) that the scent and savour thereof may remain with them all their days.

I wish that the mighty, noble acts of the glorious God, in which his curious wisdom, matchless goodness, and infinite power as the sun at noon-day do shine forth gloriously, may bear such weight in my judgment, that I may talk of them often to my children, and thereby make the memorial of them immortal. When others transmit their own filthy wickedness, let me transmit thy famous works to my posterity, that they may sing when I am in the place of silence. We have heard with our ears, our father hath told us of old, what wonders thou didst in his days. I would that national mercies may be recorded in their memories, that as they share in the fruit of them, so they may return thanks for them. In special, I wish that God's signal favours to my soul may be engraven on the tables of their hearts. The kindnesses which my God bestoweth on me are my riches; how much should I wrong my children if I should not make them heirs of such precious treasures! Every favour makes me a debtor to my God, the fountain of them; how much should I wrong my God if, when I am sure to die in debt, I should not command and charge my heirs to do their utmost, by praise and thankfulness, to satisfy those millions of eternal obligations by which I am bound to the Lord! Lord, let those vast sums which I owe to thy Majesty be ever so fresh in my mind and memory, that I may not hide them from my children, but may 'shew to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done,' Ps. lxxviii. 4.

I desire that my children's sinful and miserable conditions by nature may night and day call to me to be fervent and frequent in prayer to God for their conversion. If their bodies were dying, how should I weep and wail! Now their souls are perishing, shall I have no pity? If any of them be deprived of a temporal life, how do I sigh and sob; and when by sin they have deprived themselves of eternal life, shall there be no crying, no complaining? As the Shunammite, when her son was dead, went to the prophet of the Lord for his recovery, so, since my children are all dead in sin, let me go to the Lord of the prophets, and never leave him till he speak to them in their blood, 'Live.' Alas! though their generation is partly from below, yet their regeneration must be wholly from above:

they must be converted or condemned; and they can as soon stop the sun in its course as convert themselves from their evil courses; the rocks will as easily yield crops of corn as they the fruits of righteousness. All my pains will be to no purpose unless God vouchsafe his assistance. Lord, let their sin and misery cry to my heart, that I may continually cry in thine ears, and give thee no rest till thou give them rest in thy Son. When I beg the blessing, let it please thee to bestow the blessing, and then I know they shall be blessed. O Father of spirits, who knowest that my poor children are polluted in the womb, and estranged from the womb, manifest thy grace and goodness, and wash them in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. As they bear the image of the first Adam, cause them to bear the image of the second Adam. Let thy grace be their beauty, and the eternal weight of glory their portion. Do thou pity their dying souls. Alas! they cannot pity themselves: how can I see the death, the eternal death of their souls? Oh do thou cause them to hear thy voice and live. Remember thy covenant unto thy saints, that thou wilt be a God to them and to their seed. Do not forget thy promise, upon which thou hast caused me to trust. Oh thou dearest Redeemer, who hast said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' I bring them now to thee; do not reject them. I present them to thee in the trembling arms of my weak faith; oh do thou lay thy hands on them and bless them. Blessed Jesus, who knowest fully the pollution of their natures, the difficulty of their conversions, and that boundless wrath to which they are liable, let thy bowels yearn towards them, and thy Spirit so accompany their education, that they may become thy seed, and in them thou mayest see the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied. [And, Lord, if any of thy people shall gain any benefit by this weak piece, let this be the return they make for his pains, even to pour out their prayers to thy Majesty for the author and his children, that they may all see the felicity of thy chosen, rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance.]

I wish that my love to my children's souls may hinder my allowing them in any sin, knowing that such favour would make us all suffer for ever. Bitter physic is most likely to purge predominant ill humours. The whole country would say I was cruel, if, when their bodies were wounded, I should, for fear of putting them to pain, refuse to lance their wounds, and let them fester and kill them. What will my God say—and my children too in the other world—if I suffer their souls to die for want of searching their

spiritual sores. Oh let me not, as the queen bee, which hath a sting, yet never useth it; but shew my love to those patients, by hating their loathsome diseases, and applying medicines proper, be they never so painful, for their cure. Jacob is said to bless his sons, even every one, when all he said to two of them was by way of cursing their sins, Gen. xlix. 5–7. The eagle loveth her young, yet sometimes pierceth and pricketh them. My God hath told me, 'Withhold not correction from thy child; for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die,' Prov. xxiii. 13. That the rod on earth may keep him from the rack in hell, correction here may prevent his execution hereafter. Oh that I might be so prudent as first to try to draw them to virtue and godliness with the cords of love; but if that will not do, rather to prick them forward than to suffer them to flag behind, and to come short of heaven and happiness. When vipers are lashed they cast up their poison; Lord, be thou pleased so to strike in with every stroke, that the rod of correction may be a rod of instruction, and their weeping here may prevent their going to that place where is nothing but weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

I wish that my life may be without fault, that I may walk in the path of God's precepts for the sake of them that follow me. Should I run out of God's way, how likely are my children to tread in the same steps of wickedness! Nature would tempt them to imitate my wanderings, but grace alone can teach them to follow me in God's way; besides, how ill doth that cowardly commander encourage his soldiers to fight the Lord's battles, who shrinks back himself! In vain doth he command others to fall on, whilst he flieth off. Oh that I may be so pious in all my words and works, so gracious in all my dealings and duties, that religion may be written in so fair a character in my whole conversation, that strangers may be taken with it, and that my children may with comfort and credit write after my copy. Lord, whilst others, turning out of the highway of holiness, as an *ignis fatuus*, draw their children into those bogs and quagmires in which they sink and perish, let me, as the pillar of fire, go before mine to the land of promise, and shine as a true light to direct them in the way to everlasting life.

I wish that my care may chiefly run towards their inward man, yet that it may not rest there, but that I may in my place and to my power, be mindful of their outward man, esteeming and befriending the servant for the great heir's sake. Their bodies depend wholly upon their souls for their well-being to eternity;

but their souls depend much upon their bodies for their well-doing in time. Bad tools are a great hindrance to good work. I wish, therefore, that according to my ability I may allow my children all that breeding and learning which may in any degree be subservient to their souls, or make them in any measure more serviceable to church or state in which they live.

I wish that I may never be cruel to my own flesh, in denying them through my idleness or prodigality their necessary food. Brutes take much pains to make provision for their young. What a scraping doth the hen keep for her chickens! Some beasts will even famish themselves to feed their young; and shall I be worse than a beast? Oh let me never be in the number of them that are without natural affection; and since I profess myself to be a Christian, I may not be excelled by heathen, and deny the faith in neglecting to provide for my family.

I desire that I may not bring up my children in any degree to bring down my country; that none of mine may be plagues to the people amongst which God's providence shall call them, by living like drones upon others' hard labour, or feeding like ravenous beasts upon what they can get from others by fraud or force. Why should I leave them naked in the midst of those shot which the devil and the world will make against them? Oh give me to make conscience of thy command in breeding them to some lawful likely calling, wherein they may be serviceable to thy Majesty, their own families, and their country; yet in the choice of a master let me choose for my Maker—I mean such a one as will teach them not only how to do his work, but also how to work the work of him that sent them into the world. And oh, let thy blessing so accompany their diligence in their callings, that they may have what thy wisdom seeth fit to bear their charges till they come to their journey's end.

I wish that, when God's providence shall offer me a fit match, I may not through covetousness or peevishness be averse to their marriage. Let me not upon any pretence, through my negligence, tempt them to disobedience. Why should I refuse a mercy which my God calls me to receive, and hinder their good, which, by the bonds of nature and grace, I am engaged to further? yet let me never judge of the fitness of a person by the beauty of the outward, but of the inner man; not by her estate in the world, but by her estate in the covenant. Why should I sell the inestimable soul of my child for a little corruptible silver, or at least the comfort of his life, for that which signifieth no more in the other world than

a few brass counters? Lord, let none of mine be unequally yoked, (what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?) but let my care be that my sons match with them that are married first to thy Son, and let me give my daughter to such Christians as are given to Christ, and shall hereafter be with him where he is, to behold his glory.

I desire that I may willingly whilst I live, if my God bless me with an estate, part with so much as prudence and piety may judge convenient for my children's portions. Why should I, like a dunghill, be good for nothing till carried forth? What I have is all my God's: I am not his treasurer to lay it up, but his steward to lay it out for his honour. Lord, keep riches out of my heart, how much soever they are in my hand, that I may cheerfully dispose of them according to thy call and command, especially to them whom nature as well as Scripture enjoins me to favour. And let thy grace so accompany what thou enablest me to give, that, as some glorious diamond to a gold ring, it may make their estate, though it be but little, of great value. Give me and mine neither poverty nor riches; feed us with food convenient for us, lest we be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest we be poor and steal, and take the name of our God in vain.

Finally, I wish that in this relation of a father I may in all these precepts carry myself as thy child, and as may be most for thy own credit. Lord, my sons are thy sons, and my daughters are thy daughters. Thine is the propriety in them; thou hast put them out to me only to nurse and bring them up for thee. Oh let thy power so prosper my labours that now in their minority they may be prepared for that noble work which thou designest them for in the other world; and when they shall come to age, that thou shalt send thy servants to fetch them home, they may be conveyed by holy angels to the Father's house, where I and the children which thou hast given me shall love, and live, and reign, and rejoice with thee for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

How Christians may make religion their business, and exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of children.

Having despatched the duties of parents in relation to their children, I proceed to the duties of children in relation to their parents.

Thy duty is, reader, as well to make religion thy business in the relation of a son as of a father; to shine brightly with holiness in an inferior as well as superior orb.

It is the glory and credit of children to drink in the dews of godliness in the morning of their lives. Oh, it is a lovely sight to behold those trees blossoming with the fruits of the Spirit in the spring of their age; to behold one that is fourteen for the greenness of his age, to be forty in the graciousness of his carriage. 'Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king,' Eccles. iv. 13. Observe, friend, what a garland of honour the Holy Ghost puts on the head of a holy child. He is put in the scales upon the greatest disadvantage with the noblest person (that is ungodly) in the world, and preferred before him. In the one scale is a child, in the other scale an old man; in the one scale a poor child, in the other scale an old king. Childhood itself is contemptible, and obvious to scorn and derision. Youth, which is a degree above childhood, is liable to contempt. 'Let no man despise thy youth,' 1 Tim. iv. 12, intimating that much dirty filth is usually thrown on young faces, Isa. iii. 4; Eph. iv. 14. Reproach is so incident to youth, that the same word in the Hebrew signifies both, Job xxix. 4, and xxvii. 6. But poverty, added to infancy and childhood, makes it more obnoxious to reproach and contumely. The poor is hated of not only strangers, but all his neighbours. Poor men are objects of much disrespect and prejudice: where the hedge is low every one will trample over it, hence, to want and be abased are in Scripture conjoined, Phil. iv. 11. But poor children are much more slighted than poor men. A man hath some presence, and that forceth some respect; but a child hath none. On the other side, age is honourable in itself: 'Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of old men.' The silver crown of hoary hairs calls for honour, as well as the golden crown on the sovereign's head, Lev. xix. 32. The hoary head strikes an awe into young hearts; but age, joined with a crown, a kingdom, is more venerable. Yet this poor child that is wise—*i.e.*, that feareth God, and keepeth his commandments—doth infinitely outweigh, and is exceedingly more worth than, an old king that is wicked. Thou that art young and poor, if pious, remember this for thy comfort, that God himself hath said, Thou art a better person than the greatest worldly prince, and art worth more than he that is owner of two crowns.

Shall I, or rather God, advise thee, therefore, to 'remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,' Eccles. xii. 1. Remembering

implieth all the mercy God bestows on thee, Jer. xxxi. 20, and all the duty which thou owest to God. Do not, as some write of the Syracusians,[1] that they abstain from church till they are sixty years old, and then, being weak and unable for wickedness, they mind godliness; but remember the Ancient of days in the time of thy youth. How gloriously do their names shine in the chronicle of Scripture who listed themselves early under Christ's banner. 'I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth,' saith Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 12. Timothy from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Josiah, in the eighth year of his age, began to seek the God of his fathers, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. In the time of the law God commanded his people to offer up to him the young and lusty in sacrifice, typifying that he expecteth the youth and strength of thy days to his service. Sure I am, as the titmouse in the spring destroyeth the bees sitting on the willow-trees in the sun, so doth Satan devour many souls in their youth, whilst they are securely refreshing themselves with carnal comforts.

I shall offer thee three or four thoughts to quicken thee to the subsequent duties, that thy obedience to thy father on earth may proceed from conscience to thy Father in heaven, and that thou mayest exercise thyself to godliness in this relation.

First, Consider the profit of early piety. Some fruits, ripe early in the year, are worth treble the price of fruits latterly ripe. Godliness at any time brings in much gain, but he that first sets up this holy trade, and followeth it faithfully, is sure to be the richest at last. The earlier men set out in the morning, the further they will go, supposing that they do not loiter, in the day of their lives. No calling so certain as this holy, heavenly calling. If he that begins late gets thousands, he that begins early gets millions; and according to the degrees of grace, such shall the degrees of glory be. 'He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth liberally, shall reap liberally.' One main end of grace is to prepare and capacitate the soul for glory. Now, as the bigger the bore is, and the wider the vessel is, the more water or wine it will hold; so the more holiness any one hath, he is capable of, and fitted for, the more happiness. I know that all in heaven shall be full and have enough, but who would have a pint pot full of diamonds, when he might have a quart or a pottle? Who would have the fulness of a spoon, when he might have a large vessel?

Methinks, reader, happiness should be so desirable that thou shouldst endeavour for the greatest degree. Who would have a

[1] Brerewood Enquir., 135.

thin crop and lean harvest by later sowing his seed? If thou art ambitious for a high degree of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory; if thou art covetous for a large portion of the treasure in heaven; if thou wouldst drink deeply of those rivers of pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore, then dedicate the morning of thy time to the Father of eternity.

Besides, thou wilt find much comfort, by a great degree of grace, in this world, which is no mean profit. Strong bodies have much comfort in their lives, which weak bodies lose, being often troubled with aches and pains. Strong Christians walk steadily and cheerfully with God, when weak ones walk as men dancing on a rope, in fear every step, being full of doubts, and much in the dark about their eternal conditions. As in a moonshiny morning, when the sun doth but peep into our parts of the world, we know not whether it be night or day; but when the sun ariseth higher, we see plainly that it is day. Those that have but a little light of holiness are full of doubts and fears; sometimes they hope it is the sunlight of grace and true godliness, and then again they fear it is but the moonlight of nature or morality; but when this light increaseth in any heart, and shineth brighter and brighter, then they see clearly it is day—it is a beam from the Sun of righteousness—and hence they walk so comfortably and cheerfully. Hereby also much sin and sorrow may be prevented. Some who have broken their bones in their youth have felt the pain of them all along, against change of weather, to their dying hour. How sadly have many saints felt and bewailed their youth sins! 'Remember not against me the sins of my youth, nor my trangressions, O Lord,' saith David, Ps. xxv. 7. 'I was ashamed and confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth,' saith Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 19. Old wounds may cause fresh woe many years after. Oh, it will be a sad greeting when young sins and old bones meet together! 'Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to inherit the sins of my youth,' saith Job, chap. xiii. 26. The sweet wicked ways of my youth did breed such worms in my soul, saith holy Mr Baynes in his Letters, that my heavenly father continueth my bitter worm-seed. God calls men to a reckoning often for their old debts, and suffereth his judgments to arrest them when they think they are forgotten and forgiven. Tricks of youth prove troubles in old age. Good Augustine [1] doth much lament his coming in to Christ late; *Sero te cognovi lumen verum, sero te cognovi*—Alas! Lord, it was late before I knew thee to be the true light. When sin and

[1] Aug., Soliloq. cap. 33.

the soul have lived together many years as husband and wife, if ever they part, it will be as Phaltiel and Michal, with many tears.

There is a necessity of thy repentance or ruin. Now, as the longer a wound hath festered, the more torment the patient must be put to in searching it, and cutting out the corrupt flesh, if ever he be cured; so the longer thou goest on in sin, the greater will thy sorrow be, if ever thou art saved.

Further, God will take it very kindly; he loveth the first fruits, and they were ever pleasing to him. He remembereth the kindness of thy youth, Jer. ii. 2; not only his kindness to thee, but also thy kindness to him at that time. Young creatures are most pleasing to men's palates, old ones are tough and distasteful; young Christians are exceeding acceptable to the blessed God. He takes the kindness of your youth very kindly. And as he remembereth youthful lusts to revenge them, so he remembereth youthful love and youthful loyalty to requite it. With what confidence may he who remembereth God in his youth cast himself upon, and expect that God should remember him in his old age. 'Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth; for thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth,' Ps. lxxi. 5, 9.

Besides, hereby thou wilt be a comfort to thy parents. How will it rejoice their hearts to see grace bud, when nature doth but blossom in thee! Epaminondas was wont to say,[1] *Se longe maximum suarum laudum fructum capere, quod earum spectatores haberet parentes*—that he was glad of nothing more than that his parents were alive to rejoice in his noble actions. Cornelius was the staff of his father's age, a great credit and comfort, and therefore obtained the honourable name of *Scipio* among the Romans. 'A wise son maketh a glad father,' as Samuel did Elkanah; 'but a foolish son,' as Esau to Rebecca, 'is an heaviness to his mother,' Prov. x. 1. Oh, who would not rather be as Obed to Naomi, a restorer of her life, and a nourisher of her old age, Ruth iv. 19. Nay, thy pious conversation may work, supposing thy parents are wicked, for their conversion; and oh, what a comfort wouldst thou then be to thy parents in begetting them to a glorious, eternal life, who had begotten and conceived thee to a miserable, eternal death! Then thou wouldst put the great question of the master of moral philosophy[2] out of question, whether a child may not confer more benefits on his father than he hath received from him?

[1] Cornel. Nepos. [2] Senec. de Benef., lib. iii. cap. 35.

It is good, saith the Spirit of God, that a man should bear the yoke from his youth, Lam. iii. 27—not only the yoke of affliction and misery betimes; so yoke is sometimes taken, Jer. xxxi. 18, but also the yoke of subjection and piety, Mat. xi. 30. Aristotle observeth that those pigeons are best which are hatched in the spring; those which are hatched in autumn are not so good.[1] By early piety God is most delighted, (oh, how his heart is taken with a young disciple! his ears are ravished with the hosannahs of children;) Satan most grieved, sin and sorrow prevented, parents rejoiced, and thy own soul most advantaged. Oh, it is good that thou shouldst bear the yoke from thy youth.

2dly, Consider, delays are dangerous. The naturalist observeth that the locusts use to come in the beginning of the shooting of the latter growth, and devour *herbam serotinam*, the latter grown grass. Late repentance, like untimely fruits, doth seldom come to anything. To put off God till old age, is to go about to wind up the strings when they are breaking in pieces.

Three things will speak thy deferring to mind godliness to be very dangerous.

First, Life is uncertain. As young as thou art, thou mayest be old enough for a grave. How often doth death, like lightning, blast the green corn? Thou thinkest possibly of doing much when thou art old, but what if thou diest when thou art young? Doth not experience tell thee that few live to be old; nay, that though all die to be buried, yet few live to be married. Look into church-books and see if most that are written in the calendar of the dead were not such as had their breasts full of milk, and their bones full of marrow. Look into the churchyard, and see if there be not several graves of thy size and length. Look into thy own body, and see whether the foundation upon which thy building standeth be not rotten and liable every day to be blown down with a small wind of sickness. 'Childhood and youth are vanity,' not only in regard of their fickleness and inconstancy, but also in regard of their brittleness and frailty, Eccles. xi. 10. Childhood is but a blossom which is easily blown off; youth is but a bud which is soon nipped. What wise man would cast a work of such infinite weight and absolute necessity as thy conversion is, upon an *uncertainty?*

2. God will not always be found. I have read of one that, deferring repentance to his old age, and then going about it, he heard a voice, *Des illi furfurem cui dedisti farinam*, Give him the bran to whom thou hast given the flour. When men give the devil the

[1] Arist. de generat., lib. v. cap. 13.

cream of their lives, God often suffereth them to give him the whey. 'O seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him whilst he is near,' Isa. lv. 5. If thou refusest him now, he may refuse thee hereafter. Canst thou think that he will be put off with the bottom and dregs of thy time, when the devil hath had the spirits and quintessence? Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation; to-day if thou wilt hear his voice. If thou sayest it is too soon to-day, God may say it is too late to-morrow.

Reader, because the thief on the cross hath stole away many a precious soul, who have been encouraged from his pattern to procrastinate their conversion—lest thou shouldst defer upon that example, consider, first, There is but one such example in the whole Bible; and is not he mad, that because Paul's ship run against a rock, and all the passengers were saved, should thence be encouraged to split his vessel upon a rock? Secondly, It is a pattern without a promise, and to expect anything from God without a promise is presumption. Thirdly, Christ wrought that miracle to manifest his deity, even then when his human nature was lowest; now there will never be the like reason for such an action whilst the world continueth. Fourthly, We do not read that that thief ever heard of Christ before. When God calls men late to work in his vineyard, he will certainly accept of late service; but when he calls men early, they must then labour, or hereafter it may be too late.

3. Every day rendereth thee more indisposed. Thy youth is exceeding liable and prone to evil, and so exceeding averse and contrary to good, how averse wilt thou be then to God and godliness in thy old age? The longer sin and Satan possess the fort of thy heart, the more they will fortify and strengthen it against God and holiness.[1] The longer thou wanderest out of God's way, the more unwilling thou wilt be to come back; sin possibly now is as loathsome as physic, but when thou art used to it, thou mayest think it as pleasant as food, and then thou wilt not easily be dissuaded from it. Thy conscience, now tender, will quickly be seared; thy heart, now somewhat tractable, will quickly be hardened; temptations, now distasteful, will quickly be embraced; the faculties of thy soul will be distracted with earthly cares and cumbrances, the passions of the mind will be impetuous and impatient of any check or curb, thy understanding will be more darkened with hellish mists of ignorance, thy will more stubborn and refractory, and then how hard will it be to make thee holy! Can the

[1] Cereus in vitiis flecti, monitoribus asper.—Horat. of a young man in Arte Poeti.

leopard change his spot, or the blackamore his skin? no more can he that is accustomed to do evil, learn to do well. When thou hast once spent the prime of thy days in Satan's drudgery, thy flesh will like thy master so well, that it will be hard to persuade thee to accept of liberty, Jer. xiii. 23.

Now what wise man that hath a great journey to go, of as much concernment to him as his life, and but one day allowed him for it, would set out wrong in the morning, a clean contrary way, supposing he may go it an hour before night, when the whole day is little enough for it?

Thirdly, Consider, God deserveth thy youth. When Alexander was dying, being asked who should enjoy his crown after his death, he answered, *Detur digniori*, Let it be given to him that is most worthy. Reader, wilt thou bestow thy youth, which is the crown of thine age, to him that is most worthy? Then it must be to God; his propriety in all thy time sheweth that he is most worthy of the first of thy time. All thy time is God's, not only manhood and old age, if thou dost arrive at them, but also thy youth; all the servant's time is his master's; all the child's time is his father's; all the creature's time is his Maker's; therefore, to abridge him of it, and deny it to him, is theft and robbery.

He is a great God, and therefore not to be put off with things of the least value. If Jacob send a present to the lord of Egypt, he will send the best of the land. Great princes must have the best presents. Surely, then, the blessed and glorious potentate should have that part of thy life which is of greatest price; I mean thy youth.

He is thy best friend, and therefore deserves the flower of thy age, the best of thy time. The life of man is cast into four distinct states, childhood, youth, manhood, and old age, which are frequently referred to the four seasons of the year; but youth is the spring, the glory, and beauty of it. Now the best of our lives must be given to the fountain of our lives; God thought of thee before thou hadst a being; he poured thee out like milk, and curdled thee like cheese; he clothed thee with skin and flesh, and fenced thee with bones and sinews; he granted thee life and favour, Job x. 10–12, and was tender of thee in the womb, when neither father nor mother could help thee. He brought thee into the world, and provided full breasts for thee against the time that thou wast born. Though when thou didst first behold the light he could have sent thee into utter darkness, yet he forbore thee. Though in thy infancy thou wast like a little boat in the ocean, liable to all sorts

of storms, and in danger every moment of death, yet his visitation hath preserved thy spirit. When thou wast a child he loved thee, and entered into covenant with thee; when thou wast in thy blood cast out naked and filthy, and no eye pitied thee, he had compassion on thee, and washed thee in the blood of his own Son, sent thee raiment out of his own wardrobe to cover thy nakedness, took the whole charge of thy nursing and nurture upon himself, provided his Spirit to be thy tutor and governor; hath spread a table in the gospel of all sorts of dainties and delicates for thy constant diet, and hath prepared his own most glorious palace to be thy eternal inheritance when thou comest to age; and doth not this God deserve the best and flower of thy time? Doth the flesh or the world deserve the best of thy days, as the blessed God doth? Is it rational to make a feast for thine enemies, and to put off thy best friends with a few scraps which they leave? When he might justly have sent thee out of thy mother's womb into the prison of hell, he reprieved thee; and now when he calls thee presently to sue out thy pardon, that thy execution may be avoided, wilt thou deny him? A wise man will sell his best wares to them that will give the best price. Let thy conscience be judge whether God or the flesh will pay the best for the service of thy youth. Possibly God afforded thee a large portion of outward blessings; he hath cast thy lot, as Pharaoh did Jacob's, Gen. xxvii. 6, in the best of the land, and wilt thou deny him the best of thy life? Oh fear the Lord in thy youth, for he is a great king, a loving father, a bountiful master, and so worthy to be feared. What Saul did out of covetousness and disobedience, do thou out of conscience and dutifulness—spare the best to sacrifice to the Lord thy God, 1 Sam. xv. 15.

Fourthly, Consider, God will call thee to an account for thy youth. Tricks of youth will come to a public trial. In this world God punisheth many for their disobedience to parents. How many rebellious children hath God hanged on gibbets, to make others fearful of such sins? How fully did God recompense on the head of Abimelech all the evil which he did to his father! Judges ix. 24. Wicked children shorten many times their parents' lives. The heathen have thought an undutiful child an intolerable burden. Democrates Abderites, when he could not reclaim his drunken son, put out his own eyes, that he might not see his intemperance.[1] The mother of Themistocles was so vexed at his youthful vices, that she hanged herself for grief.[2] Sorrow hath killed many parents for the disso-

[1] Aul. Gel. [2] Valer. Max.

luteness of their sons; therefore God cuts off many of those dissolute ones in the midst of their days. Witness Hophni and Phinehas, Absalom and Adonijah. They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean. Their soul perisheth among the boys, and their life among the buggerers, according to Beza's reading, Job xxxvi. 14. In the Hebrew it is thus: Their soul dieth in youth.[1] The death of the body is nothing to the death of the soul; the soul's death is damnation. God gathereth these grapes, even whilst they are green, for the wine-press of his eternal wrath.

If they live, God often punisheth them in the like. A scoffing Ham is punished with a profane Canaan. But, however, God will meet with them at death, and at the great day, for all their gracelessness and disobedience. The lamp by its light and brightness enticeth the fly to embrace it, but by that means she is either drowned in the oil or burned in the flame at last. So the world with its fair shows may entice thee to wantonness; but, alas! how many at last are drowned in its sweet waters! The wise man doth seek to allay the young man's heat by this thought, 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment,' Eccles. xi. 9. Here is a cooler for the high-flown youngster's courage. The words, after an ironical concession, express a most dreadful commination; as if he had said, Make thy lust the rule of thy life; swim down cheerfully in a full stream of carnal comforts; deny thyself nothing that thine eye can desire, or thine heart delight in; let thy senses give law to thy rational soul. But know that (notwithstanding all thy cursed courses to stop the mouth of conscience, and thy wicked designs to drown those innate principles of fear and restraint in ungodly pleasures) there is a terrible day approaching, the day of the perdition of ungodly men, wherein that God, whose fear thou now rejectest, whose favour thou now neglectest, who observeth and recordeth all thy ways of wickedness, will, whether thou wilt or no, bring thee to a strict reckoning for all thy follies, vanities, and excesses of thy youth. Believe it, then those morsels will be poison in thy belly, which now are so pleasant in thy mouth. Oh what confusion will cover thy face, and what indignation and grief will cut thy very heart, when before angels and men all the neglect of thy duty and thy secret deeds of darkness shall be brought to light! But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.

[1] Moritur cum juventa illa anima eorum.—*Junius.*

How wilt thou answer when God shall reckon with thee for the breach of thy baptismal covenant? Hannibal's father made him take a solemn oath to maintain perpetual hostility with Rome.[1] Thy parents caused thee in baptism to take an oath of fealty and allegiance to Christ, and to maintain continual war with his enemies. Let conscience judge whether to wear Christ's livery and do Satan's drudgery, whether to expect Christ's pay and not to fight his battles, be not a derision of thy baptism at this day, and will not prove thy destruction at the last day. If young persons would but ride sometimes upon the pale horse of death, think seriously of their latter ends, they would not, as they do, ride post in the road to hell.

Reader, these motives are not jesting matters; therefore weigh them well, unless thou art resolved upon thine eternal ruin.

I proceed to the duties of children to parents.

The first duty is reverence. There is a distance between children and parents; therefore there must be reverence from children to parents. 'A son honoureth his father,' Mal. i. 6. The difference in age commands honour. The heathen saw this by the light of nature; therefore the Spartans punished such young men as did not reverence elder persons.[2] Hence that proverb derived its pedigree, *In sola Sparta expedit senescere*, It is only good to be old in Sparta. But where to difference in age is adjoined this relation, there the greater respect is required: 'Honour thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise,' Eph. vi. 2. Even lambs will kneel (which is the posture of the greatest reverence) to their dams.[3]

This reverence must be inward in heart. Children should have awful apprehensions of their parents as their superiors, as those to whom they are engaged, under God, both for their beings and breedings. 'Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father; I am the Lord,' Lev. xix. 3. Fear is due to parents, as they are God's deputies; hence some make the fifth command part of the first table. As the first four relate immediately to God, so this fifth, though to men, yet in their politic capacity, as they are gods. Our parents, say the heathen, are our household gods; and the Scripture calls children their father's glory. Surely, then, they should honour them, Hosea ix. 11. And the mother is by Moses first expressed, because she, by reason of her fondness and familiarity, is

[1] Liv., lib. xxxv.

[2] Plutarch.

[3] Honoris autem quinque sunt partes. Reverentia; amor; obedientia, in omnibus rebus a Deo non prohibitis; gratitudo et patientia in eorum infirmitatibus et nævis ferendis.—*Polan. in Præcept* v.

apt to be most despised; which Solomon hinteth in that prohibition, 'Despise not thy mother when she is old,' Prov. xxiii. 22. Esau had some respect for his father, so would forbear the execution of his intended murder till his death, but takes not the least thought for his mother, Gen. xxvii. 41. But where there is any fear of our Father in heaven, there will be a fear of mother as well as father upon earth. Many seem to honour their parents whilst they are young and rich, but when they grow old and diseased, then, especially if they be poor, they slight and contemn them.[1] They serve their parents as men do great candles, set them in high candlesticks whilst they are full of tallow, but when all their substance is wasted, tread them under their feet. Or as birds, when they can fly and find their meat, they regard the old ones no longer.

This reverence must be outward in life, and that both in language and carriage.

1. In language. Children must speak reverently to their parents, and respectfully of their parents. First, To them. Rachel, though her father was wicked, yet speaks reverently: 'Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise,' Gen. xxxi. 35. Secondly, Of them. It is said of parents that have their quiver full of such polished arrows, 'They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemy in the gate,' Ps. cxxvii. 5. Their children will be tender of their father's credit, and not suffer others, much less will themselves, to cast dirt in their faces, but will, by pleading for them, wipe it off. Oh, how bad a bird is he that fouls his own nest! Those that bespatter their parents' names, sin even against nature; and, like Canaan, for discovering their father's nakedness, they are sure to meet with a curse. Some tell us that the Jews punished all children with death who did publicly backbite their parents.

Reader, if, like Reuben, thou defilest thy father's bed, thou wilt as certainly lose the blessing, Gen. xlix. 4, as he the birthright. There are children that exceed in this unnatural sin, and instead of commending, curse their parents. 'But every one that curseth his father or his mother shall surely be put to death,' Deut. xx. 9; Exod. xxi. 17. God hath severe judgment for such sinful practices.[2] The Hebrew doctors observe four sorts of death inflicted by the judges of Israel, whereof stoning, which was the death wherewith children that cursed their parents were to die, was the worst.

[1] Est hoc animi perversissimi judicium, quia lex naturæ jubet ut benefactoribus bona referatur gratia, inter quos primum obtinent locum parentes.—*Gualter.*

[2] Deus horrenda peccata horrendis pœnis immutabiliter vindicat.—*Pareus in Gen.* xlix. 4.

Ainsworth on Exod. xxi. 12. It is a discredit to parents, and uncomely for their children, to be saucy and clownish in their speeches. The younger son, as bad as he was, would give his father good words: 'I go, sir,' though he went not, Mat. xxi. 30. But how abominable is it to revile or rail at them!

2. In carriage. How respectfully did Joseph, though lord of Egypt, demean himself towards his poor father Jacob: 'He bowed himself with his face to the earth,' Gen. xlviii. 12. It is recorded of Sir Thomas Moore, that when he was Lord Chancellor, and so superior to his father, he would go up to the king's bench, before he sat in Chancery, and there ask his father, who was one of the judges there, blessing before all the people. How reverently did Solomon, though a king, carry himself to his mother: 'The king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand,' 1 Kings ii. 19. Where there is holiness in a child, he will honour his parents, and God hath ruined them that have refused to do it.

There are three things which are dear to a man—his soul, his life, and his good name. Undutiful children that invert the order of nature, contemn the authority of God in that of their parents, prove monsters of ingratitude to their greatest earthly benefactors, have been plagued and punished by God in the loss of all the three,[1] Prov. xx. 20, and xxx. 17.

It is observed of the cudweed that the younger leaves overtop the elder; so many cursed children think they are never high enough unless they trample upon their parents as their footstool. It is too usual with the sons of Belial to nod their heads, to wink with their eyes, and wriggle their mouths at their parents, and often in derision to call them the old man, and the old woman, and perhaps the old doating fool; but I would have such remember but this one verse of God's word, which hundreds of such children have experienced in this world: 'The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth his mother, the ravens of the valleys shall peck it out, and the young eagles shall eat it,' Prov. xxx. 17. The eye, which is the offending part, shall be certainly punished, but how? truly so, as they may read their sin in their suffering. They

[1] It is mentioned as an honour to one Colonel Edmunds, that when his countrymen came to him, when he was sitting amongst several persons of quality, and told him, My lord your father, and such knights and ladies, your kindred, are in health. He bade his friends there present not to believe one word the knave spake; for, saith he, my father is a poor baker, whom this knave would make a lord to curry favour with me.

disgrace and shame their parents, and God will bring them to disgraceful and shameful deaths. They shall be hanged in the air as spectacles of God's anger, and unworthy to live either in heaven or earth. Crows will quickly scent out such carcases, and peck out those eyes which were wont to leer and jeer and wink at their parents. At Milan there was a vicious youth, who, when reproved by his mother, used to make a wry mouth, and to point at her with his finger in scorn, but afterwards he was condemned for felony, and being on the gallows, was observed to make the same wry mouths which he did formerly to his mother.[1] The very heathen were so sensible of such sins that they would sow up such children in a sack, with a cat, a dog, a viper, and an ape, and so drown them; in this manner, Publicus Malleolus was put to death by the Romans.

Secondly, Obedience. The law of nature bindeth man to this. Though it is generally concluded, civil subjection of servants to masters came in by sin, yet natural subjection of sons to fathers did not.[2] The great philosopher tells us[3] it is not fit to disobey τῷ Θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, God nor our father. Cicero therefore being to read a lecture of modesty and temperance to his friend Clodia, raised up her father Appius Caius from the grave, and in his name delivered those precepts to her, as judging no counsel so prevalent with children as that which is given by parents.[4] 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right,' Eph. vi. 1. In which sentence the apostle delivereth both the reason and the rule of children's obedience. The reason is, 'for this is right;' it is agreeable to righteousness that thou shouldst yield subjection to them, to whom thou hast so many and such great obligations. It is right by the law of God, of nature, and of nations. The rule is 'in the Lord,' that is, in lawful, not in sinful commands. Jonathan refused to obey his father, when he charged him to kill David,[5] and Asa deposed his mother for her idolatries. 'He that hateth not father and mother for me, is not worthy of me,' Luke xxi. 14. All obedience to man must be regulated by a good conscience towards God. If a parent command his child to steal, or to profane the Lord's day by bodily labour, or the like, which God forbids, then he goeth beyond his bounds, and therefore is not to be obeyed. But in all lawful precepts children must not

[1] Theat. Hist.
[2] Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. xix.
[3] Arist. Rhet.
[4] Cic. ad Attic., lib. xii.
[5] Irritantur pueri si conentur parentes impiis mandatis eos onerare. Impium fuit illud Saulis cum præcepit Jonathani ut Davidem amicum suum, et innoxium, captum ad se adduceret, ut morte mulctaretur.—*Daven. in Col.* iii. 21.

dispute, but obey their parents. Jesus Christ himself gives a pattern of this: he was subject to his parents, Luke ii. 51. He was not only obedient to his Father by eternal generation, but even to his supposed father, and to his mother by a natural, or rather supernatural, conception. Though, as his human nature was hypostatically united to the divine, he might have pleaded its privilege, yet he was subject to his parents.

The Rechabites, for obeying a particular command of their father, to drink no wine, have God's commendation and benediction,[1] Jer. xxxv. 8, 14–20. God delights in a dutiful child, and blesseth him, but he hates the disobedient, and blasteth them. He hath not only whipped such with temporal punishments, but even executed them with spiritual plagues, than which no doom is more dreadful on this side the place of the damned.

It is observable, reader, that when the apostle counteth those sins and corruptions for which God delivered up the heathen to a reprobate sense and vile affections, this one is in the list, disobedience to parents, among that herd of monstrous lusts, Rom. i. 30. Voluntary disobedience to men is punished with judiciary disobedience to God. Joseph, when commanded by his father to go to his brethren, though he knew their ill-will to him, and how dangerous the journey might prove, yet durst not disobey, Gen. xxxvii. 13.

Job, it seems, was happy in a dutiful progeny: 'Oh that I were as in months past, when the Almighty was yet with me, and my children were about me,' Job xxix. 2, 5. The latter phrase, 'when my children were about me,' may speak these three particulars:—

1. Their presence with him. They were as olive branches round about his table. Parents are the centre, and children are a circumference drawn about them.

2. Their protection. They were about him to defend him to their power in any danger. As the Lord is said to be round about his people, because he is their safety and protection, Ps. cxxv. 2, so Job's children were about their father to do what lay in them for his shelter.

3. Their obedience to him. They were about him as so many servants, to know his pleasure and obey his precepts. As the father was singular in his patience, so were the children in their obedience. Few fathers in their old age have good ground for Job's wish. Some children will not afford their parents so much comfort as their company; others are about them as ravens are about a carcase—to

[1] Debeo affectum parenti, sed magis obsequium debeo salutis auctori.—*Amb. Orat. Funebr. de ob. Valent.*

devour it, not to defend it. When their parents have any flesh on their back, any wealth in their hands, then they fly to them; but when they have got all, and there is nothing left but bare bones, then they fly from them. Most are about them as weeds are about the corn—to choke and hinder, not to comfort and help their parents. Ah, how many of these branches grow up about their fathers as trees about our windows—to hinder their light and darken their lives. But, reader, if thou wouldst not have thy heavenly Father's curse, be not thy earthly father's cross. The first affirmative precept with a promise is this of obedience to parents, Eph. vi. 2, 3.

Especially in marriage be obedient to thy parents. Do not, like profane Esau, make an ungodly match to vex thy mother; believe it, thou wilt at last vex thyself most, Gen. xxviii. 8, 9. By Moses' law the daughter's vow was not valid unless the father did ratify it, Num. xxx. 6. Hagar took a wife for Ishmael, Gen. xxi. 21. Rebekah took a wife for Jacob. And, indeed, children that match without their parents' consent may expect to meet with God's curse; and such men have sometimes found that their wives, instead of being guides to rule their houses, have been griefs to cut their very hearts. Judah married a Canaanite without his father's consent, and he had two such wicked sons that God slew them with his own hands. Erasmus, speaking of Levinus, that got a wife, neglecting the counsel of his friends about it, and so proving unhappy, saith, *Res calide peracta est magis quam callide*,[1]—wantonness and lust, not wit or wisdom, made up the match.

God giveth the parents as great a title to their children as to their goods; for he allowed that even children should be sold to pay their parents' debts. Children are their parents' greatest outward riches—far before lands, be they worth thousands—and therefore to dispose of themselves without their leave is the greatest outward robbery.[2] If men hang them that steal cattle, surely God hath severer punishments for them that steal children.

Tertullian, writing to his wife a discourse of marriage, closeth it with this: Oh, how shall I be able sufficiently to describe the happy state of that couple whom the church hath married, prayer confirmed, angels in heaven proclaimed, and parents on earth approved?

Besides, in thy calling have an eye to thy father's choice. Elkanah and Hannah were obeyed by Samuel when they devoted him to the

[1] Eras. Epist.

[2] Causæ propinquæ matrimonii sunt tres; consensus parentum, consensus sponsi, et consensus sponsæ.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v.

ministry. The papists falsely tell us that children may—a boy at twelve, a maid at fourteen years old—enter into their monkish orders without their parents' consent; but how much do they forget themselves to make children at their own disposal so soon, when in their blasphemous hymns they will not allow Christ, though God-man, freedom from subjection to his mother, after he hath been many hundred years glorious in heaven, but still cry, Command thy Son!

3. Submission. Children must not only be subject to their father's precepts, but also submit to their punishments. 'We have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence,' Heb. xii. 9.[1] It is unseemly for a child to be striving when his father is striking; but it is abominable for him to murmur at what he doth suffer. Parents' authority should make children endure it patiently. Some brutes will quietly bear blows from their keeper, and shall not children from their father?

Reader, if thy parents reprove or chastise thee, it is for thy profit; and wilt thou grumble at that which tendeth to thy good? Alas! they punish thee here, that thou mayest not perish for ever. Besides, they correct thee because God commands them; and canst thou be displeased at them because they dare not displease God? Canst thou be angry at them for being afraid of God's anger? Alas! who knoweth the power of his anger?

Isaac was obedient to Abraham when he bound him for a sacrifice. It is observable, saith Calvin, that Isaac, being twenty-five years old, was able to resist his old weak father, yet he yielded himself quietly both to be bound and to die.[2] It is probable, indeed, that Abraham had acquainted his son with God's command; and with that, saith Luther, he did rest contented. To receive correction doth distinguish a true son from a bastard, Heb. xii. 8. The heathen orator will inform the Christian that he should not only conceal, but also submit, even to injuries, if his father offer any to him.[3] The Turks, though cruelly lashed, do yet, when they are well whipped, kiss his hand that commanded it, and pay the officer for his pains. The heathen saw it so equal, that going too far on a good ground, they did allow the parents' power of life and death over their children.

[1] Sævitia patris in filium grave peccatum est; sed ira filii in patrem grave monstrum est.

[2] Calv. in Gen. xxii.

[3] Filios non modo reticere parentum injurias, sed animo æquo etiam ferre oportere. —*In Oratione pro Cluentio.*

It is reported of Ælian, that being some considerable time absent from his father, when he returned home his father asked him what he had learned. Sir, saith he, you shall know ere long.[1] A little after, his father corrected him for some fault, and he took it patiently, saying, Sir, you see I have learned somewhat; for I have learned to bear with your anger, and quietly to suffer what you please to inflict.

Some young persons scorn to be scourged; they will not, say they, be made such fools as to bear blows; but such must know that not their parents' heavy hands, but their own proud hearts, make them fools. 'Correction gives instruction and wisdom,' Prov. xiii. 1, 18. The way to be above the rod is for thee to be under rule; but thy main work, young man, must be to hear the voice of the rod, and to be the better for beating, so to let the rod in, that folly may go out. Be not like a post, nothing stirred by many strokes; much less like some beasts, to kick and be the more unruly for the spur, but as the holy child Jesus, who though he never sinned, yet 'learned obedience by the things which he suffered,' Heb. v. 8.

4. Affection. Children are bound to love their parents, and their obedience must grow upon this root. He is not a son, but a slave, that serveth his father merely out of fear; filial and servile obedience are opposite. As parents are tender of their children, so children ought to be tender of their parents. The dumb son of Crœsus, when one of the soldiers of Cyrus ran after his father to kill him, with the violence of natural affection, cried out suddenly, O man, kill not Crœsus! and continued speaking all his lifetime after.[2] Thy parents should be dearer to thee than thy children; what love shouldst thou return to them who were the instruments of thy life? The greatest obligations call for the greatest affection. Though Olympia, the mother of Alexander, was very morose and severe to him in his childhood, yet he was very mild and loving to her when he came to age, insomuch that when Antipater accused her to him, he would by no means hear or heed him.[3] God takes great notice of children's love and duty to their parents; therefore, say some, he lengthens their lives, because by their affectionate, obsequious carriage they lengthen their parents' lives. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and others in Scripture, eminent for their love and loyalty to their parents, had their days prolonged in the land of the living. On the other side, God hath made many unnatural children monuments of his indignation; he hath punished them dreadfully to

[1] Cæl. Rhod. lect. Var., lib. xxii. cap. 22. [2] Pez. Mel. Hist. [3] Plutarch.

fright others from such practices. Absalom's miserable end may make all children afraid of such abominable ways. Nero, who killed his mother Agrippina; Turpeia, who betrayed her father to Tatius king of the Sabines; Henry the Fifth, emperor of Germany, who dispossessed his father of his empire, did all meet with such vengeance from heaven, that none would, unless mad, ever eat at their tables to pay their reckoning.

The cuckoo is worthily used by way of reproach, and may well be hooted at, for he devoureth his own dam; Orestes killed his mother Clytemnestra; Ninus killed his mother Semiramis; Alcmeon also killed his mother; but such beasts are counted by very heathens rather monsters than men.

5. Gratitude. It is thy duty to requite their care and cost upon thee; thy body, and time, and estate, should not be thought too much for them; the law of God, as well as the law of man, doth command children to relieve their necessitous parents to their power.[1] 'But if any widow have children or nephews, let them first learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents, for this is good and acceptable before God,' 1 Tim. v. 4. It is observable, children's kindness to their parents is termed εὐσέβεια, piety or godliness, because it is a part thereof, and very acceptable to God. Æneas was surnamed *Pius* for his tenderness to his father, whom he bore on his back out of the flames of Troy. Besides, it is called a requiting them, intimating that it is not an act of grace, but of justice. It is but righteous that they should return, according to their abilities, for what they have received from their parents. Dr Taylor said to his son, when himself was going to suffer, When thy mother is waxen old, forsake her not, but provide for her to thy power, and see that she lack nothing; so will God bless thee, and give thee long life and prosperity.[2] Joseph maintained his father Jacob and his whole household, Gen. xlvii. 13. The son of Joseph, the blessed Jesus, when he was dying, in the midst of all his tortures and torments, when he was assaulted both from heaven, earth, and hell, could even then find time to commend his beloved mother to the beloved disciple. Valerius Maximus relates a story of a man sentenced to die with famine, and how his daughter came daily and gave him suck, upon which act of her piety, saith another author, his sentence was reversed.[3]

[1] Deo et parentibus non possumus reddere æqualia.—*Cajetan.*

[2] Foxe, Acts and Monuments.

[3] Liberi sunt quasi manus et brachia quibus parentum senectutem defendi; sunt pedes et crura quibus sustentari oportet.—*Davenant in Col.* iii.

The storks and mice will rise up in judgment against many children, for such is their natural affection to their dams that they nourish them when they are old. The stork, saith Pliny, doth it with such piety, that he is called by the Latins *pietati-cultrix*, and *ciconia*, of the Hebrew *sachan*, to be profitable, because he is so profitable to his parents. Some derive the name stork from the Greek στοργὴ, love, because he hath such affection for his dam.[1] Nay, hence we read of some laws called νόμοι πελαργικοὶ, which receive their denomination from the stork, providing that children should nourish and take care of their parents in their distress.[2] Nay, the requital of children to their parents in the Greek is called ἀντιπελαργωσις, which is a metaphor drawn from the stork's kindness to her old ones, which doth not only feed them, but carrieth them on her shoulders into the meadows, and brings them back.[3]

Our Saviour sharply reproveth the Pharisees for allowing children, under pretence of piety, to suffer their parents to perish, Mat. xv. 4. Surely they are cursed children that can be thus cruel to their parents; even young lions, as ravenous as they are, will spare it out of their own bellies to feed their old ones;[4] and yet many children are more savage than lions, and are so far from being men and women that they are worse than beasts.

The mother wasps and hornets, after they have wrought awhile, and procreated their kind, give over labouring, and are maintained by the industry and piety of their offspring;[5] yet, alas! rational creatures make their parents' lives so bitter by their ingratitude, that they cause them to cry out, with Jonah, 'It is better for me to die than to live,' and with Rebekah, 'I am weary of my life.'

Luther tells a story of a good father in Germany,[6] (but by the way I would advise all parents to be more wise than whilst they live to entrust their children with all their wealth; they that hang on the cradle have most commonly but short commons.) This man, saith he, gave away all he had to his children, upon condition that he should have his diet with them when he came. One day he came to one of his sons, then at dinner with a goose, which as soon as he heard his father was coming he set by; and going to take it when his father was gone, it was turned into a toad, and,

[1] Πελαργικὸς νόμος. Lex qua liberi parentes alere jubentur.

[2] Plut. de Solcr. Animal.

[3] 1 Sam. xxii. 3. ἀντιπελάργωσις beneficii accepti remuneratio, a πελαργὸς Ciconia. Metaphora a Ciconiis quæ parentes senio jam consectos nutrire, et fessos tergo recipere dicuntur.—*Aristot.*

[4] Ælian, lib. ii. cap. 22.

[5] Theat. of Polit. Flying Insects, p. 375.

[6] Loc. Com., 61. De Amore erga Parentes.

leaping upon his face, could not be removed by all his striving till it had stifled him. Our own countrymen tell us of a yeoman in Leicestershire, that made over his house and land to his son upon marriage, conditionally that his son should keep him during life; but afterwards, there falling out some difference between them, the son bade his father get him out of his house, calling him bursten-belly slave, (indeed the old man had a rupture.) The next day, as the young man was walking in his grounds, Mr Goodman, the minister of the parish, riding by, asked him how he did? He answered, very well; but before the minister was out of sight, the young man's bowels gushed out, which he carrying in his hands went home, sent for the minister, acknowledged God's justice on him for his undutifulness to his father, made his will, gave his father a considerable legacy to make him amends, and died that night.

I shall conclude this head with the wise heathen's speech to his son, upon his anger at his peevish mother:—*Socrates sentiens suum filium Lamprocleum, qui major natu fuit, matri suæ iratum; Dic mihi, O fili (ait) cognovistine unquam homines quosdam qui appellantur ingrati? Ita prorsus inquit. Considerasti igitur quos homines, et cum quid agunt, hoc nomine appellantur? Consideravi, ait, illos qui beneficiis acceptis, non reddunt gratias cum possunt, ingratos apellari. Hos vero ingratos, cum injuriosis enumerandos esse putas? Vehementer ait consideravi, et mihi videtur, a quocunque quispiam beneficiis affectus, sive amico sive inimico, non conatur reddere gratias, injustus esse. Si igitur hæc tibi vera videntur, ingratitudo manifesta injuria profecto est. Concessit. Quanto ergo majoribus quisque beneficiis acceptis non reddit gratias, tanto injustior est. Et hoc etiam concessit. Quos igitur aut a quibus (inquit) putas majoribus beneficiis affici quam liberos a parentibus, quibus primo ut sint et vivant, deinde ut bona videant, illorumque participes fiant, quæcunque dii hominibus præbent, parentes causa fuerunt? . . . Mulier vero concipiens tolerat hoc onus cum gravamine et periculis vitæ, alimento suo nutriens puerum, magno multoque labore usque ad partum proveniens;*[1] *Postea etiam nutrit, atque pro eo curam gerit, a quo tamen nunquam antea beneficii quicquam acceperat, quique non modo ignorat qui ei benefacit, sed neque declarare potest, quibus indigeat. Mater vero per conjecturam quæ conducunt, quæque grata sunt, ei conatur adimplere; multoque tempore nutrit, die nocteque laboribus affecta, ignorans quam istorum omnium mercedem habebit. Et non solum sufficit nutrire, sed cum videntur filii posse discere quicquam, quæ-*

[1] Xenophon de dictis et factis, Socratis, lib. ii.

cunque ipsimet parentes ad vitam utilia habent, docent. . . . Ad hæc adoloscentulus ait, Etsi hæc omnia, cæteraque his multo fecerit plura, nullus tamen posset profecto duritiem matris meæ sufferre. Tum Socrates, Utrum, ait, ferœ immanitatem putas difficiliorem sufferendam esse, an matris? Ego quidem, inquit, matris puto quæ talis sit. Num igitur, unquam momordit aut calcibus te percussit quem ad modum multi a feris affecti sunt? Non ista, sed ea dicit, inquit, mehercle quæ nullus unquam audire velit. Tu autem quot, Socrates ait, ei molestias tuo dicto a prima ætate die nocteque exhibuisti? . . . Tu itaque fili, si compos es mentis, deos ut tibi ignoscant exorabis, si quid matrem neglexisti, ne ingratum te esse existiment nec benefacere velint; ab hominibus quoque cavebis, ne sentientes quod contemnas parentes, pro nihilo te habeant, et omnibus amicis te privaveris. Si enim te arbitrabuntur erga parentes ingratum esse, nullus putabit te pro susceptis beneficiis fore in referenda gratia memorem. So far Xenophon concerning Socrates and his son, which I have been the larger in reciting, because thou mayest hereby understand, reader, how loathsome and abominable children's ungratefulness and undutifulness to parents, though they were peevish, was counted by the very heathen.

A good wish to the duties of a son or daughter in relation to their father and mother.

The relation of a child, speaking my great and manifold obligations to my parents, under God, for my conception, birth, and breeding, besides those many cares and fears which are incident for my sake to their tender yearning bowels; for which I am engaged by the law of God, of nature, and of nations, to be grateful and dutiful; I wish in general that I may never be so far possessed of the devil, like him in the Gospel whom no cords could hold, as to break all these bonds in sunder, but may behave myself towards my parents on earth as an obedient child of my Father in heaven. Lord, whilst others pretend much religion abroad, but manifest little piety at home, make me so conscientious of all thy commands that I may not be unmindful of my debts to others, but be sure to pay my duty, my specialties, to them.

I wish that the first of my time may be devoted to my dearest Redeemer, the Father of eternity, that the fear of my God may take such early possession of my soul that when Satan, the world,

and youthful lusts shall hereafter sue for my service, they may be wholly prevented in their projects, and disappointed of my heart, that presence-chamber being taken up beforehand. Why should I spend my young days in laying by a store of guilt, and treasuring up a heap of wrath for me to live upon in my old age? Lord, let me so emulate those worthies of thine, whose names sparkle in Scripture as the morning star in the firmament, for their early shining with the light of holiness, that I may be ambitious to have my name recorded in heaven's court-rolls for a young disciple, and remembering my Creator in the days of my youth.

I wish that the loadstone of true self-love may draw me to the Lord, and that I may be so caught with that holy bait as betimes to become a true Christian. My God will be much delighted by my early devotion. If young beasts were so pleasing to him under the law, surely young saints will be more acceptable to him under the gospel. Oh, how kindly will he take the kindness of my youth! My parents will be rejoiced to see me blossom in the spring of my age with the fruits of righteousness. They have no greater joy than to see their children walking in the truth. Why should not I, who have been the occasion of bitter pangs and sharp throes to my mother, and the cause of many cares and much cost to my father, do my utmost for both their comforts? What a sword shall I prove to pierce their souls, if, when they call me Cain, a possession, and boast that they have gotten a man from the Lord, I shall testify by my ways, as he did, that I am of the wicked one! And oh, how will their hearts revive to hear that their Joseph, whom they thought to be dead, is alive to God! Surely they will say, It is enough; and whilst they continue here, live the more contentedly, and when they depart hence, die the more cheerfully. But my early piety will bring to myself the greatest profit. How may I prevent that dishonour to my Saviour, those sins and sorrows to my own soul, which youthful lusts procure? The spiritual diseases which I contract through intemperance and inordinate affections in my youth will lie heavy at my heart, and pain me to purpose in my old age. What a proficient may I be in grace, how far may I go before others in godliness, if I set out betimes in my journey to heaven, whilst others who set out late are frighted with fears lest they should never reach that celestial palace! I may go merrily on, making God's statutes my songs in this house of my pilgrimage. Lord, let these motives be so fastened in my mind that I may give myself to thee this very moment, that thou mayest be my first love; and in this flower of my age, before I am

ravished by Satan, or defiled with any known sin, I may be thine Hephzi-bah and Beulah, thy delight, and married to thee.

I desire that the danger of delay may make me more speedy in the practice of my duty. The work of conversion must be done, or I am undone for ever. Without the second birth, my God himself hath told me that I shall not escape the second death. My life is but a vapour, which may suddenly vanish: I am not master of another hour. Why may not I, as well as others, be hurried away in haste, and in the prime of my days, before I am aware, to enter into the other world? The longer I defer, the less I am disposed; the longer the house of my heart is out of repairs, the more trouble and pains it will cost, if ever it be done. Besides, my God will not always wait upon such a silly worm. If I reject him to-day, it is just with him to refuse me to-morrow. O my soul, be not so foolish as to leave a work of such indispensable necessity to such uncertainties! Lord, give me such wisdom to consider of my latter end, that I may never hang such heavy weights, as my inestimable soul and salvation, upon such weak and uncertain wires, but may be both speedy and serious about my eternal weal.

I wish I may be so rational as to give my chiefest time and strength to him that can claim it by the strongest reasons. The Ancient of days hath the only interest in my youth. It was his mere mercy that I was not sent out of the womb into endless misery. The first tears I shed might have been in that place where there is nothing but weeping. The first swaddling band I was wrapped with might have been the chains of everlasting darkness. I was a rebel against his sacred majesty, and had traitors' blood running in my veins before I was born. As soon as I breathed in the world, I infected the air, and defiled the earth: never toad was so full of poison as my nature of pollution, yet my God spared me when he might have sunk me in the pit of perdition. Nay, he hath not only borne with me, and forborne me, but also laden me with benefits. He hath defended me from many an unknown danger. He hath delivered me out of many a distress. All his paths towards me have dropped fatness. I never was one moment out of his mind. He entered into covenant with me before ever I knew what a covenant was. My subsistence is continually by him; my dependence is every minute upon him. I cannot stir a foot, or lift a hand, or speak a word, or think a thought without him. All my happiness for this and the other world consisteth wholly in him. My life or death hangs upon his favour or fury. If I seek him early, I shall find him; but if I forsake him, I am

lost for ever. Oh, of what concernment is it to me, to please him in dedicating the prime of my days to him, which will be most pleasing! Lord, let thy great love constrain me to a gracious life, and let thine early beneficence lead to speedy and hearty repentance.

I wish that the thought of my reckoning at the last day may be so prevalent with me as to prevent my rioting at this day. My sins in youth, though they easily slip out of my memory, are registered by God. Not a thought of my heart, not a word of my tongue, not a work of my hand, but all are written in his book, and sealed up in his bag; and oh, how shall I dare to appear in his presence before millions of saints and holy angels, if I should now give myself to profaneness? With what face shall a black sinner stand before his white throne? How ugly will my deeds of darkness look in his eye, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all? The judge is the holy Jesus; his attendants are holy angels, the justices on the bench are holy persons, the law by which I must be judged for my everlasting life and death is the holy commandment given to me; and oh, how can I stand at the bar without infinite shame, grief, and horror in my unholiness! Why should not the strictness of my examination provoke me to holiness in all manner of conversation? Lord, let me so constantly, whithersoever I go, and whatsoever I do, hear the sound of the last trump in mine ears, 'Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment,' that I may so think, so speak, and so act, as one that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

I wish that I may have awful apprehensions of them that are my elders, especially in this relation. If nature taught heathen to set a high price upon their parents, what honour should I give mine, who am taught this lesson, both by nature and the clear light of Scripture? My body from them, under God, had its being, and therefore ought to be employed, in subordination to God, in their service. How should that tongue speak for them, which but for them had never spoke! How should that knee bow to them, which but for them had never been! Lord, let my tongue sooner rot than revile them; let my hands rather fall off than fall upon them; yea, it were better that my whole body should be buried alive, than it should rise up, like Absalom, to take away his life who gave me mine. It is sinful either in name or body to injure a stranger, but how sordid is it then to wrong my father or mother! I am bound to cover another's infirmity with the mantle of charity, and shall I publish their weaknesses to the world? If I take Ham's

course, I must expect his curse. Oh let me never, like Simeon and Levi, give my parents cause to speak, as Jacob, 'Thou hast made me to stink (by revealing my infirmities) among the inhabitants of the land.' Lord, let the severity of thy threatening against such sinners make me fearful of such sins; and let thy dread so fall down upon my soul, that I may both in my carriage and language reverence them for thy sake.

I wish that obedience may be the garment by which I may be known to be my father's child, as David's daughters were known by their parti-coloured clothes; that whilst others by ungodliness cut their parents' hearts with grief, and bring them with sorrow to the grave, I may, by my dutifulness in all commands which are lawful, lengthen out my own and their lives. My God hath told me of Eli's sons, that 'they hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would destroy them,' 1 Sam. ii. 25. To be a child of disobedience is a ready way for me to be marked for vengeance. If I be a son of rebellion, it is a sad sign that I am a son of perdition. Oh let me be fearful of disobeying my parents, lest I provoke my God to ruin me. Yet I wish that my dutifulness to the father of my flesh may be always regulated by my duty to the Father of spirits, that I may be sure to save God's stake before I pay my obedience to my parents. My parents are to be obeyed in the Lord, not against the Lord. It is treason to obey my immediate superior against my sovereign. Lord, let me never pretend conscience for the neglect of their righteous commands; that they may never have cause to complain of me, as thou didst once of the Jews, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;' yet if I be ever enjoined what is a sin, let me obey God rather than man. Let me in this sense call no man father on earth, for doubtless thou art only to be universally obeyed, who art my Father in heaven.

I wish that I may with patience submit both to the rods and rebukes of my parents, as believing that they are, though not pleasant, yet profitable for me. My God hath commanded them not to bear with me in sin; their allowance of me in my disobedience would be but an ill symptom of their love to my soul. How certainly should I travel to hell, if permitted to walk in the ways of my own heart! Surely, when I am in a wicked course they are my best friends that stop and hinder me from proceeding farther; their sharpest words are curing, and their severest strokes are healing. Oh let me be so sensible of my own good, as without opposition to take down this bitter physic, which, notwithstanding

its distastefulness to my body, is yet so wholesome for my precious soul. And, Lord, let thy grace be so mingled with all these means of thine appointment, that my suffering here may prevent my eternal sufferings hereafter.

I wish that affection to their persons may sweeten my subjection to their precepts; that as Jacob's seven years' hard service for Rachel seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her, so that love may be the soft lining which may make the yoke of my active and passive obedience easy and acceptable. The wall heated by the beams of the sun reflecteth some warmth back again. Grace will teach me to love mine enemies, but it is against nature not to love a friend. Beasts have much affection for their keepers, but more for the dams and sires. How fervent and fiery is my parents' love to me! how solicitous to express itself in acts of favour! How many a time have their hearts trembled for me, and their bowels yearned towards me! Oh that I might never be so far from humanity as to live below a beast, nay, to degenerate into a devil, by rendering hatred for love, and evil for good! Lord, let my obligations to my parents make such an impression on my spirit, that I may answer their ocean of love to me with such pure streams as may refresh and rejoice their hearts.

I wish that my love to my parents may not be like Rachel, beautiful and barren, but like the tree planted by the rivers of water, may bring forth fruit in due season; I mean, that it may shew itself to be sincere, by my devoting both estate and body, according to Scripture, to their service. My reason tells me what I received from them ought, under God, to be improved for them. Oh that this fire may upon all occasions so flame out as to cheer and comfort their chill and cold aged bodies with its light and heat! How tender was David of his aged parents! 1 Sam. xxii. 3. How kind was Joseph to all his kindred! The brutish eagles, though they are greedy enough of their prey, will yet spare it from themselves to feed their parents. Boughs bend towards their root. The ears of corn bow to the earth, their parent. And shall I suffer them to famish, who so many years gave me all my food, and, like the cruel kite, starve them who bred and fed me? Lord, help me to shew piety at home, by requiting my parents; and rather let my hands wear out with work, than that they through my negligence should want.

In a word, I wish that I may so imitate their gracious patterns, so submit to their wholesome rebukes, so obey their pious precepts, yield them such hearty reverence, and in all things demean myself

so dutifully, that God may be my father, and own me for his son or daughter; that my God may spare me as a man spareth his son that serveth him; that I may have a name within the house of my God better than of sons and daughters; and that when all these relations (which are calculated only for the meridian of this imperfect state) shall cease, my days may be long in the land of promise which the Lord my God hath given me for possession, and I may enjoy the glorious liberty and endless blessed life of the sons of God amongst the congregation of the first-born. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of husbands and wives; and, first, Of the duties which concern them both in common. And a good wish from a pious pair.

Marriage is the lawful conjunction of one man and one woman for the term of their natural lives, for the generation of children, the avoiding of sin, or the comfort of mutual society.[1]

First, The author of it, or efficient, is God. He published the first banns, and married the first couple that ever were in the world. Their maker was their minister to join them together, Gen. ii. 22.

Secondly, The form of it is the conjunction or mutual covenant[2] (not *carnalis copulatio*, as papists hold) between one man and one woman, Prov. ii. 18. That which is compatible to whoredom cannot be the specifical form of marriage, Mat. xix. 5.

The duration of it is for term of life; death only untieth the knot, Rom. vii. 1–3.

Thirdly, The ends of it are three:

1. The procreation of children, Gen. i. 26.
2. The benefit of a good companion, Gen. ii. 18.[3]
3. And since the fall a third hath stepped in—viz., the avoiding of fornication, 1 Cor. vii. 2. Some add a fourth, that it might be a resemblance of the mystical union between Christ and his church.

[1] Conjugium est legitima unius maris et unius feminæ conjunctio ad sobolem procreandam, vel fornicationem vitandam, vel mutuum adjumentum.—*Polan. Syntag.*, lib. x. cap. 53.

[2] *Sponsalia a spondendo*, because each did promise other to live as man and wife. —*Antiq. Rom.*

[3] Aliter Christi mors non esset fructuosa.—*Carthus. in Gen.* ii. 18.

Fourthly, The material cause, one man and one woman.

Some observe that in the creation of the world God was pleased to do it by pairs—a heaven and earth, a sun and moon, a sea and land, a night and day, a man and a woman. Marriage must be between one man and one woman, Mat. xix. 5. Bigamy and polygamy are both unlawful; but death gives a lawful bill of divorce.[1] Hence the apostle saith, 'If her husband be dead, she is free for another.' The Greek churches, because that the Scripture saith of a pastor that he must be *μίας γυναικὸς ἀνήρ*, the husband of one wife, deny their ministers all second marriages, do much mistake the place, 1 Tim. iii. 2.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, walk worthy of it, behave thyself in it, as one married to Christ. God did not institute marriage to be a hindrance, but to be a help to religion. Good company should make us walk the more cheerfully in the way of God's commandments. It is Chrysostom's observation on Gen. v. 22,[2] that in the same verse the Spirit of God said of Enoch, 'That he walked with God, and begat sons and daughters,' to teach us that matrimony and sanctity are not inconsistent. Enoch walked with God, even then when he walked with a wife. The Jewish Rabbis observe that in the names of *Ish* and *Ishah* is included *Jah*, the name of God, and that if you take out *iod* and *he*, of which that name consisteth, there remaineth nothing but *Esch*, *esch*, Fire, fire.[3] It is certain that this relation, without God's fear, is little else but fire; *conjugium* is *conjurgium*. Marriage is the sowing of dissension oftentimes, being separated from religion. The houses of such persons are, as one wittily observeth, but as fencing schools, wherein the two sexes seem to have met together for nothing but to play the prizes and to try masteries. The fire of passion reigneth in the man, and the fire of pride rageth in the woman; and the fire of contention between both. It is the want of godliness in this relation which maketh many married persons look on their matrimonial covenant just as a dog doth on his chain, and a prisoner on his fetters, snarling and striving to break it in sunder, and set themselves at liberty.

The heathen Romans brought the wife home to her husband's

[1] Conjugium a conjungendo, *i.e.*, a jugo communi quo vir et uxor simul in unam carnem, et veluti in unum hominem jungantur. Digamia est quum quis uxori legitimæ adhuc viventi aliam illi repudiatæ (extra causam in verbo Dei comprehensam) superinduxerit. Polygamia est quum quis eodem tempore plures uxores habet.—*Polanus.*

[2] Ἀκουέτωσαν οἱ ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες, καὶ μὴ νομιζέτωσαν τον γάμον κώλυμα εἶναι πρὸς τὴν εὐχαρίστησιν εἰς τον Θεόν, &c.—*Chrysost. Gen.*, Hom. 21.

[3] Buxtorfius.

house on the marriage night with five torches, signifying the need which married persons have of five gods or goddesses, Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Suadela, and Diana. The Jews at their marriages were not unmindful of God; but from their constant custom of their wedding devotion, their very wedding house was called *Beth hillula*, the house of praise. What is the meaning of the apostle's expression concerning marrying in the Lord, if godliness were not to be exercised in this estate? 1 Cor. vii. 29, 'Only in the Lord,' that is, say some, in the church among God's kindred. They who marry out of that line marry out of the Lord; or in the Lord, that is, in his fear and faith. They who marry without godliness marry without God. The Spanish proverb hath a truth in it, that there is more required to marriage than two pair of legs in one pair of sheets.

First, I shall give thee some motives to quicken thee to mind religion in this relation.

Secondly, I shall speak both to the common and special duties which concern this condition.

1. For arguments to conscientiousness in this state,

(1.) Consider the dignity of marriage. Marriage is honourable, and therefore thy carriage in it must be answerable. An honourable relation calls for a holy conversation. 'Marriage is honourable in all,' Heb. xiii. 4; not only νομιμός, but τιμιος, not only lawful and unblameable, but also noble and honourable. Some among the papists condemn it as an impure, and so ignoble state; though others of them, in the other extreme, say it is a sacrament, nay, go farther, and tell us it confers grace;[1] but that marriage is not dishonest nor dishonourable, will appear if we consider,

[1.] This relation is of divine institution. God did institute marriage, and himself immediately made the first match. We say, all marriages are made in heaven; it is true in this, as well as other respects, that marriage itself came down from heaven. God hath as well appointed that persons should meet in this estate, as foreappointed what persons should meet. As God married the human nature to the divine, so he marrieth human persons to each other. Now, how abominable is it to call that impure which God hath cleansed; or to make the holy God the author of a sinful ordinance, which they do that hold marriage to be unholy?[2]

[1] Cum matrimonium per sensibilia signa sanctitatis, remedium contra peccatum homini exhibeat, sacramentum est.—*Aquin.*, Sup. 3, Q. 2, Art. 1.

[2] Matrimonium quod in fide Christi contrahitur, habet quod gratiam conferat ad ea operanda quæ in matrimonio requiruntur.—*Idem*, Sup. 3, Quest. 42, Art. 3.

[2.] This relation was instituted in man's estate of innocency. The season speaketh much to the dignity of the action. Man struck a covenant with a woman before he broke his covenant with his God. He was married to a wife before he was marred by the wicked one. Surely those popish doctors who term it filthiness and pollution, do not consider that it was ordained before man's fall and corruption. The Saturnalian heretics held that marriage was of the devil; Jerome, whom Pope Syricius followed, in his passionate love of virginity, did make a blot in his exposition of Rom. viii. 8. They that are in the flesh, *i.e.*, *qui inserviunt officio conjugali*, that is, saith he, those that are married, cannot please God, when man pleased God by taking a wife, before ever he displeased God by hearkening to his wife. God would never have said, 'It is not good for man to be alone,' if it had been evil for him to have had such a companion.

But, reader, this dignity to which thou art advanced, requireth suitable duty. They that are more honoured than others, should be more holy than others. If thy relation be a resemblance of that near and dear affection betwixt Christ and his church, surely a husband and wife should have some resemblance in it of their subjection to the Father. 'Walk worthy of the calling whereunto thou art called.' Adorn thy calling by thy gracious carriage, and do not proclaim thyself to be of his mind who said that a wife was a name of honour and no more;[1] that marriage is a name of honour, and a work of pleasure, and nothing else.

(2.) Consider the frailty of the married. If a married life would always last, thou mightst have some colour for minding nothing but thy carnal liberty in it; but consider that death will untie this fast knot, and this relation will die with thee. That hand which dissolveth the union betwixt thy body and thy soul, will dissolve the union betwixt husband and wife; and oh, what a sad parting will that couple have at death, when thou thinkest that thou hast lived so long, merely to eat, and drink, and bed, and bring up children together, and have never minded, at least in earnest, the fear and favour of the blessed God, whereby they might have lived together for ever! 'The time is short,' saith the apostle; 'it remaineth that they that have wives, be as though they had none,' 1 Cor. vii. 29. The season of married persons' abode together is short; it is rolled up, a metaphor from cloth rolled up, only a little left at the end, therefore they should be more indifferent about earth, and more diligent about heaven, more moderate about natu-

[1] Eli. Vere.

ral and civil, and more serious about spiritual and eternal concernments. Wise persons, when they are called to places which they must enjoy for a short time, will make the most of them; he that hath an excellent book lent him for a small time, will, if wise, improve it whilst he hath it. This relation is of short duration; after a few more meals' meat, and a few more nights' sleep together, death will disjoin you, and will ye not get the most benefit ye can by it? The Jews at this day have a custom, when a couple are married, to break the glass wherein the bridegroom and bride have drunk, to admonish them of mortality.[1]

Reader, art thou a husband? Consider that within a few days God will take away from thee the delight of thine eyes with a stroke; thy voice ere long will not be, Where is my wife? or, Call your mother, or mistress, to a child or servant; but, alas! she is dead! and like Abraham's, Where shall I have a place to bury my dead out of my sight? 'And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.' And then if thou reflectest upon thy carriage towards her, and conversation with her, how thou didst live with her without God, often wrangling, but seldom or never praying together; often contriving how to increase your temporal goods, but never conspiring together how to further your everlasting good, then surely thou wilt have cause to cry out, Alas! my poor wife, where art thou housed in the other world? and to mourn and to weep for her indeed, and for thyself too. Will she not, thinkest thou, say to thee, when she meets thee at the great day, as Zipporah to Moses, A bloody husband hast thou been to me?

Reader, if thou art a wife, the next time thou lookest on thy loving husband, consider with thyself: This dearly beloved husband of mine, in whose company I have had such content and comfort, must ere long be separated from me; those ruddy lips, which have so often kissed me, will be pale; that countenance, which hath so often smiled on me, will be wan and ghastly; those arms, which have so often embraced, will hang down; that whole body will ere long be food for worms, and crumble into dust; and shall I make it my business only to please his palate, and feed his flesh, and to live with him as brutes do together, minding nothing but carnal pleasure? or shall I not rather provoke him to love and to good works, meekly persuade him to mind piety, to pray with me, to provide for death and judgment, that we may live together as fellow-heirs, and at last meet together in the blessed inheritance?

[1] Sphynx Philos.

It was the speech of Augustus to his wife, when he was leaving the world, *Livia, nostri conjugii memor vive, et vale*, Livia, live mindful of our love, and farewell. Oh, it is happy when a dying husband can say to his yoke-fellow, Wife, live, remember our holy conversation and sweet communion with the blessed God, and farewell, till I shall meet thee in heaven.

(3.) Consider your covenant and engagement each to other, for which God will bring you to judgment. Marriage promises must be performed. The Jews in their dowry bill,[1] which they gave their wives, had these words: Upon the sixth day of the week, &c., Be unto me a wife according to the law of Moses and Israel, and I, according to the word of God, will honour, maintain, and govern thee according to the manner of the husbands amongst the Jews, which do honour, maintain, and govern their wives faithfully. Husbands and wives have engaged themselves each to other, of which covenants God is a witness, and he keeps the bonds, and therefore it behoves them not to break them. The marriage covenant is called the covenant of God, Prov. ii. 17; Mal. ii. 14: first, Because he is the author of it, as he is the ordainer of that state; secondly, Because he is a witness to it:[2] 'The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant,' Mal. ii. 14; thirdly, Because he will avenge the breach of it. How severely doth God avenge the quarrel of his covenant! When men are the only parties in the covenant, God will be the avenger of the breach of covenant. How sorely did Zedekiah smart for his breaking his covenant with the king of Babylon, a heathen king! 'As I live, saith the Lord, in the place where the king dwelleth, that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even in the midst of Babylon he shall die. As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant which he hath broken, will I recompense upon his own head,' Ezek. xvii. 16, 19; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. The papists say that no faith is to be kept with the heathen or heretics. The Turks say that no covenant is to be kept with dogs, that is, with Christians; but God made Zedekiah pay dearly for his breach of promise to a heathen. Some husbands and wives, like the old Thracians, esteem their oaths as nothing; they can as easily slip their conjugal covenants, as children do their ripe nuts. But such must know, that if they, like harlots, forget the

[1] In Babylon. Talmud.

[2] Non tam respiciendum cui, quam per quem juramus.—Lum. 3. sent. Distin. 39.

covenant of their God, he will remember their forgetfulness, and recompense their perjury upon their own heads, Mal. iii. 5, as he tells them, 'I will come near to you to judgment, and will be a swift witness against false swearers.'[1] Such think God far off, but his fury is near them. One hearing perjury condemned by a preacher, and how it never escaped unpunished, boasted, I have foresworn myself, and yet my right hand is no shorter than my left;[2] but he had no sooner uttered his words but an inflammation arose in that hand, and he was forced to cut it off, lest it should have killed him. God quickly made his right hand shorter than his left. They that like men transgress their covenant, or (as Junius and Tremel. read it, *tanquam hominis transgressi sunt fœdus*, make no more of breaking it than if it had been the covenant of a man), will find that it is the covenant of a God, and that God will have a controversy with them for it, Hosea vi. 7, and iv. 1.

(4.) Consider the crosses that attend a married condition.[3] Sin at first turned the fruitful earth into briers, and it turneth every estate into brambles. A married condition is comfortable, but yet, like the bee, it hath its sting as well as its honey; as the rose, it hath many prickles as well as some sweetness. 'Such,' saith the apostle, speaking of married persons, 'shall have trouble in the flesh,' 1 Cor. vii. 28. Crosses will come: sometimes the wife is passionate, sometimes the husband is peevish, the children they are froward and undutiful, servants, they are untoward and unfaithful; sometimes their names are aspersed, sometimes their estates are diminished; now sickness attacketh some in the family, by and by death arresteth them; and how is it possible that these burdens should be borne with any comfort or patience, if married persons do not make religion their business in this relation?

Men promise themselves nothing but sweet and sugar in this condition—and, indeed, where there is love and godliness, it is a lovely, delightful conjunction—but they meet with much sourness and bitterness in it; for this cause, say some, the happy estate of the saints in heaven is set out by that, wherein they neither marry nor are given in marriage. Marriage is both honourable and onerable; as it hath its blessings, so it is not without its bur-

[1] De impio fœderis contemptu eos accusat, *q.d.*, non majore religione observan fœdus initum cum Deo vivente quam quod homo iniit cum homine.—*Parœus in Hosea* vi. 7.

[2] Sword against Swearers.

[3] Consequentia matrimonii sunt variæ cruces et molestiæ, et sæpe paupertas, morbi, exilia, curæ, injuriæ, tum a domesticis tum a peregrinis illatæ, et alia id genus quæ in matrimonio ferenda sunt.—*Zanch., ibid.*

dens. It is not good for man to be alone, yet it is good for man not to touch a woman. Moses calls marriage good, as it was an ordinance of God, and instituted for excellent ends; but Paul calls it, in effect, evil, not in opposition to piety, for it is not a sinful evil, but in opposition to tranquillity, for it hath in it many penal and civil evils; it is γλυκύπικρον, a sweet bitter thing. Moses speaks of marriage in general, or intentionally, so it is good; Paul speaks of marriage in particular seasons of persecution, and accidentally. 'Woe be to them that are with child, or give suck in those days,' Gen. ii. 18; 1 Cor. vii. 1.

How many trials and troubles did Jacob meet with in his marriage, from his father-in-law, from his wives, from his children! All brought and added some gall and wormwood to his cup, which surely he could never have drunk up so pleasantly, if godliness had not sweetened it.

Reader, as a prisoner may make his fetters more easy by lining them with soft wool, so mayest thou make the cares and crosses incident to this condition much more easy and tolerable by godliness. Some married persons have had many afflictions, yet have undergone them with much cheerfulness; but truly piety was the bladder which preserved them from sinking, and kept their heads above water. Grace alone, like the wood which Moses cast into the waters of Marah, can make these bitter waters sweet and pleasant.

Protagoras, by his natural dexterity, ordered the burden he was to bear with more ease and advantage.[1] The Christian, by his spiritual alacrity, may lighten his heaviest loads; and through piety, which is his spiritual strength, walk cheerfully under the greatest pressures. I must tell thee it is godliness alone which can teach thee, as a bird in a hedge, to sing and be cheerful in the midst of those thorns and briers, those troubles which in this estate surround thee.

2. I shall now speak to the duties incumbent on this relation, both common to both, or special to either.

The common duties are,

First, Amity. This is the nearest relation, and therefore requireth the dearest affection. They are one in many bonds: they have one name, and therefore should have one nature; they are one in the fruit of their loins, and hence should be one in love, Job xix. 17. They are one body, one flesh, and so should have but one soul, one spirit; they have one bed, one board, one house, and therefore should be one in heart. The love betwixt Christ and his spouse,

[1] Aul. Gel., lib. v. cap. 3.

which is so fervent that she is sick of love to him, and he died for love to her, Cant. ii. 4; John xv. 13, is set out by the love betwixt husband and wife, to shew how great this love is, or at least ought to be.[1] Without the union of hearts, the union of bodies will be no benefit. Where the obligation is greatest, there the affection must be strongest. The husband ought to love his wife, and she him, above father, mother, children, and all others in the world. Some write of the asp, that he never wanders abroad with his companion; and of the vipers, that they cast up their poison before they couple. Nature herein reads married persons a lecture of love. What some say of Castor and Pollux, is true of husband and wife, If they be divided, it is ominous.

The very heathen were so sensible of this duty, that in their wedding sacrifices to Juno,[2] the maker of marriage, in their esteem, they took all the gall out of the beast and threw it away, to signify that all wrath and bitterness must be laid aside in this relation. That emblem which some give of the Netherlands, two bottles tied together floating on the waters, with this motto, *Si collidimur frangimur*, If we clash we are broken, will suit well to husband and wife. God was so tender of this, that therefore he forbade husbands newly married to go to war the first year, and commanded that they should not be charged with any business, Deut. xxiv. 5. Not only, as some think, because such men's hearts would be at home with their wives, and so they would have little mind to fight, whereas God would have all his servants cheerful at his work, and all his soldiers volunteers in his wars; but partly that they might enjoy the great comfort of each other's company, God having appointed marriage for that end. They both leave their father's family and their nearest friends, and therefore have the more need of tendering and cherishing one another, especially at first; but chiefly that by their cohabitation the first year, and the solace they had in each other's society, their affections might be so close knit together as to continue for ever after. It is happy where all the strife is, which shall please the other most; when the husband's care is how to please his wife, and the wife's care is how to please her husband; when their minds are divided into divers thoughts, casting this way and that way, and every way, how to

[1] Nihil est felicius vita conjugali, si adsint illa, quæ deus vult esse in illo conjugio unio præsertim animorum, ita ut anima una sit in duobus corporibus, eoque si sunt vere una caro.

[2] Junoni nuptiali rem divinam cum facerent, e victima fel exemptum post aram abjicere, moris fuit receptissimi; innuente (opinor) autore bilem prorsus iramve a conjugali sequestrandam jucunditate.—*Cœ. Rhodig. Ant. Lec.*, lib. xxviii. cap. 21.

give best content to each other, according to the signification of the apostle's word, 1 Cor. vii. 33, 35.[1] The saints are doves. A dove is so called περίστερα παρὰ τὸ περισσῶς ἐρᾶν, of the excessive love of the one to the other.[2] They are so much one, that Christ calls his church *unica columba*, my only dove, Cant. v. 8.

Whatsoever afflictions should come, yet their love should continue. If it be fading, it was but feigned. It must not be like fire on our hearths, which a little water of adversity may extinguish; but like the fire on the altar, which never goeth out. The conjunction between husband and wife is set out by the same word by which God's joining himself to his people is set forth, Jer. l. 5, compared with Gen. xxix. 34, which is translated by some a gluing themselves together.[3] So the word προσκολληθῆναι in the Greek also signifieth, shall cleave to his wife, Mat. xix. 51, be glued to his wife, importing a conjunction so near as nothing can come between, and so firm that nothing can dissolve it. A table will often cleave in the whole wood before it will part asunder where it is glued. God's love is everlasting. Neither earth nor hell can abate, much less extinguish, his love to his people. Though differences should arise, yet husband and wife must not be like earthen vessels, which can never be joined together when once broken in pieces, but the falling out of lovers should be the renewing of love; and like bones when broken and well set, their love should be the stronger whilst they live together. If any discontent had happened betwixt the Roman husbands and wives, they went to a certain chapel built in the honour of a goddess called *dea viviplaca, a vivis placandis*, whence, after they had been a while there, they returned friends.—*Roman Antiq.*

Their love must last whilst they live. No affliction must quench it, no flood drown it; nay, like the ark of Noah, it must rise the higher for these waters. When the Roman bridegroom[4] had taken his bride, he did divide the hair of her head with the top of a spear, called *hasta cœlibaris*, wherewith some fencer had been killed, to signify that nothing should disjoin them but suchlike spears or violence. True love will be insuperable, inseparable. The longer it continueth in a good soul, the greater will it grow. A prudent observation of each others' nature, and forbearance will prevent many fallings out.

[1] μέριμνα. Anxie et cum summa animi sollicitudine atque ærumna cogitat.—*Zanch.* [2] Arist. de Gen. Ani., lib. ii. cap. 8.

[3] προσκολλάομαι, agglutinor.—*Eras.*, *Beza.* To glue, a κόλλα, glue. The LXX use it in Gen. ii. 24: *Sic verbum Hebræum dabak*, They shall be joined and glued as close as if they were but one piece.

[4] Salmuth Lib. Rerum deperdit. cap. de nuptiis.

A reverend man seeing a very choleric couple that were married live very comfortably, asked the man how they could so sweetly consort together? He answered, When my wife's fit is upon her, I yield to her; when my fit is upon me, she yields to me, and so we never strive together, but asunder. When there is no fuel to feed it, the fire will go out. Oh, it is a loving sight to see grace thus combating with and conquering nature! But marriage is a bitter sweet, as one saith of a wife, when the married couple are ever contending and wrangling, as fire and water never meet but they fight and strive for the mastery; when their words to each other, which should be softer than oil and healing, are sharper than a two-edged sword and wounding. The ancients, in their marriage hieroglyphics, used to paint Mercury standing by Venus, to signify that smooth and fair expressions should be the concomitants of such a condition. And indeed, if their affections to each other be not feigned, their expressions will be fair; for the tongue is but the heart's expositor to explain its mind and meaning. Surely if any in the world should, as Paul writes to his Corinthians, 1 Cor. i. 10, speak the same thing, avoid divisions, be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, husbands and wives should. They are one, 1. *Jure originis*, for Eve was made of Adam's body. 2. They are one, *suppositione legis;* the law of man makes them one; no action is brought against the wife, for she goeth under covert-barn. 3. They are one, *jure conjunctionis*, by God's institution; they are one in begetting a seed to God; as the plant of one tree set into another they do grow up, not as two, but one, bringing forth fruit.

Only one thing under this head must not be omitted.

Married persons must take heed of mistaking in the ground of their affections. If wit, or wealth, or beauty be the cause, when these be taken away, which some providence or other may quickly do, the effect will cease. If these be the loadstones, when they are removed, their love will remove too; but if the foundation be eternal, their affection will be immortal—the land-flood of youthful affections will quickly be dried up, but the fountain of spiritual love will send forth such pleasant streams as will refresh them whilst they live. When conscience of God's ordinance and piety in the person are the motives, their love will be lasting. That love which is grounded on lust is like the smith's bar of iron, which now is red hot, and by and by, being put into water, is colder than ever; nay, that this love caused by lust may be turned into hatred. Amnon, though dead, speaketh to us. I wish it were not true in

most of both sexes what Marcia, the daughter of Cato, said of one sex, That she could not find a man that would love her more than hers, and therefore she would not marry. Most love with the eyes, (beauty,) or with the hands, (money,) hence they love not with the heart. When the root of love is wrong, the fruit will quickly be rotten; they who love not one another out of conscience, may in time be brought to hate one another.

Secondly, Fidelity. Husbands and wives must be faithful to each other. They are partners in the nearest degree imaginable; and therefore, if unfaithful, the most foolish thieves that are possible.

This faithfulness must shew itself in reference to their estates, names, and bodies.

1. They ought to be faithful each to other in regard of their estates. The husband ought to work, and the wife must see that she do not waste. The man's business is to get, and the woman's to keep and save. If he playeth away his estate abroad, he wrongeth his wife. If she be prodigal of her estate at home, she robs her husband. Both must endeavour, in their several places, by all lawful means, to increase their portions. Some, indeed, are united together, as the beams of the sun in a burning-glass, to consume and waste that which their parents have gathered for them with much labour and weariness. They pull down that house in a day which was some years in building; but God often makes such lie without doors, by bringing them to want. Many a house, like a hive of bees being prodigal of their honey, at least loiterers, in the summer, have been brought to beggary and a starving condition in the winter. Husbands and wives should not be worse than ants, but endeavour in their callings to increase their heaps, like two watermen in oars, that row and labour together on their several sides to get, through God's blessing, an honest and comfortable living. They are a pitiful pair that, like a pair of cards, are much together; but it is at play, not at work. A Christian couple, like the two hands, should both work to maintain the head and body, and not, like broken bones, be lazing on the bed of idleness.

This faithfulness is requisite as to their names. They ought to conceal each other's infirmities; it is wonderful folly for wives to publish their husbands' faults, and for husbands to proclaim their wives' weaknesses. Hereby they disparage and injure themselves; they disparage themselves both in blazing abroad their want of wit in making such an ill choice, and as they are sharers in each other's honour and disgrace. Joseph, a just man, would not make

Mary a public example, though he thought her guilty of a great crime, Mat. i.

They injure themselves; for such offences, proceeding from lack of love, if not from hatred, are hardliest forgiven. When breaches fall out and are concealed, they are half reconciled; but if one of the parties blab them abroad, like rankled sores, they are hard to cure. Alphonsus, king of Arragon, was wont to say, that to procure a quiet life, the husband must be deaf, and the wife blind. Sure it is, the man must not hear to declare it abroad, nor the wife see it to say it among her gossips whatever is amiss at home, if they would live in peace.

The faithfulness enjoined as to their bodies; this consisteth in giving to each the seasonable, moderate use of the other's body, and denying it to all others.[1] None hath power of the man's body but his wife, and none hath power of the woman's body but the husband. Christians are called doves; now they are noted by naturalists to be very chaste creatures—they keep themselves to one mate, and will admit of no other.[2] It is abominable and brutish for them that are called Christians to embrace the beds, the bosom of strangers, Prov. v. 19; it ought not to be named, much less to be acted, amongst them that would be called saints, Eph. v. 3. The very motions or temptations to it should be rejected with the greatest dislike and detestation.[3] Other failings disturb their comfort, but this unfaithfulness dissolveth their covenant.

The very storks are famous for their faithfulness to their mates. It is credibly reported by some that have seen it, that whole flocks of storks, meeting in a meadow, they have set in the midst of them two of their company that have been found disloyal, and running upon them with main force, have killed them with their beaks; so that the company breaking up, the rest flying away, the two offenders only have been found dead.[4] This fowl, saith Tostatus,[5] is so chaste that, as long as the female liveth, he coupleth not with any others. Certainly the fowls of the air will rise up and condemn those beasts of the earth that, like goats, are unsatiable in their lust, and still long after strange flesh. Flee fornication, saith the apostle. The bodies of saints are the temples of God, and surely ought not to be the stews of Satan. Pompey never prospered after he had defiled the temple, 1 Cor. vi. 19. The houses

[1] Arist. de Gener. Animal., lib. iv. cap. 6.
[2] Adulterium quasi ad alterius torum.
[3] Castitas a κάζω orno, quia præcipuum est hominis ornamentum.—*Rivet.*
[4] Sphynx et Phi., p. 131.
[5] Tostat., Qu. 35.

of our bodies are not built to be styes of filthiness, but to be vessels of holiness,[1] ver. 13. Our bodies shall be beautiful at the last day, like unto the glorious body of Christ; and shall they be deformed and defiled at this day? ver. 14. Our bodies are members of the holy Jesus, and therefore ought not to be the members of harlots,[2] ver. 15. Other sins are committed by external objects without, but uncleanness within and against the body, ver. 16. Our bodies are purchased by Christ, and therefore the owner, not a traitor, should dwell in it. He that bought the house of our bodies deserves the service of them, ver. 20. Oh, what excellent arguments are here to dissuade from such unnatural defilements, which Solomon saith are worse than theft, and Chrysostom, than idolatry![3] Prov. vi. 30. He is surely an inexcusable and unpardonable thief that, having money enough in his own chest, will yet steal from his neighbour.

Men must have the highest thoughts of their own wives, and women of their own husbands, and then they will not look so as to lust after others. The Persian lady, at Cyrus's wedding, being afterwards asked how she liked the bridegroom, answered, I know not, for I saw none there but my own husband. 'Let not thine heart incline to the ways of a whorish woman; go not astray after her: her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death,'[4] Prov. vii. 25, 27. Some nations have punished adultery with death; by the laws of Julia it was death among the Romans, and by the laws of Solon amongst the Athenians,[5] and amongst them they were torn with wild horses. Aurelianus the emperor, caused such to be tied to the tops of trees, bowed together, and so to be torn in sunder. Zaleneus made a law that the adulterer should lose both his eyes; so much these heathen saw by the light of nature. The Egyptians did cut off the nose of the adulteress, and gave the man a thousand jerks. By God's law it is death—nay, death eternal. 'Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,' Heb. xiii. 4. He hath unheard of pains for such unnatural pleasures. Before Moses's time it was punished with burning, Gen. xxxviii. 24; and both before and after Moses that fire of lust is punished with the eternal fire of hell.

[1] Negat scortationem ulla necessitate licitam seu argumentis.—*Dickson in 1 Cor.* vi.

[2] Strumpets are called harlots from one Arlet, an impudent whore, the mother o William the Conqueror.

[3] Chrysost., Hom. 62 in Johan.

[4] Principium dulce est, sed finis amoris amarus.

[5] Brevis est voluptas adulterii, æterna pœna.

3. To help one another both in civil and sacred things. Husbands and wives must help to make the weight of the family more tolerable; they must share in each other's joys and sorrows, like those twins which still laughed and wept together. When the husband and wife, like stones in a foundation, are close united, and join together to bear up the building of domestical affairs, there will be the less fear of the house falling on their heads. They must help one another in civil and natural things, comforting each other both in health and sickness, cheering one another both in a prosperous and adverse condition. Marriage is called *conjugium*, from *jugum*, a yoke, because married persons should draw evenly and equally, and thereby the load would be carried the more lightly. The philosopher tells us that turtle-doves sit upon their eggs by course.[1] Christians in a married condition should join in putting their shoulders to domestical burdens. Husbands and wives should live together as soul and body. Though the soul be more noble than the body, yet it hath the chiefest care of the compound. Soul and body sympathise with each other; they mourn and rejoice together; they conspire for the good of one another. The soul helpeth the body with its faculties; the body helps the soul with its members. The soul is the guide of the body; the body is the instrument of the soul. If the soul be sad, the body feels it. How soon doth the face speak the soul's complexion! If the body be sick, the soul is sensible, and little else than sorrow. Thus the husband and wife must be mutually assisting about their personal and their domestical concernments. As the husband is the chief, so he must take the chiefest care of things. As the wife is helped by her husband, so she must be a help to her husband. If the wife be weak, the husband must be more watchful for her, and tender of her, that she receive no wrongs; for therefore, as Lot said of the angels, is she come under the shadow of his roof. If the husband be sick or sad, the wife must endeavour to be both his physician and physic, his comforter and cordial. Some that speak of the pre-existency of souls, say, that in the beginning souls were created by pairs; and hence it came to pass that marriages were happy or unhappy. He that matcheth with the soul created with him was happy; he that missed it was miserable; though I leave this to their fancy, which is the only stock upon which they graft this opinion. Yet this is true, that couple is happy which is not only one in condition, but also one in disposition.

The swan, say naturalists, is called in Greek κυκνὸς, of κυεῖν, to

[1] Aristot. de Generat. Animal., lib. iv. cap. 6.

embrace, (hence the Latin *cygnus*,) because the male doth embrace, as it were, the female with his long neck; and they do one defend, saith he, the other, and sit upon their nest by turns, and equally have care of their young ones when hatched. This is a fit resemblance of a religious pair, who, for their family's provision, join in their places, and in the bringing up their children piously are united in their pains. The Switzers made a law, that if a man were condemned to die, his parents, if alive, should execute him; because children's woe comes usually from their parents' neglect and wickedness. Poor children must be plants for paradise, or fuel for hell-fire. Oh, how should parents unite in their care and endeavour to make them pious, that they may never go to the place of torment! Our Saviour bid the disciples to suffer little children to come to him; and as he commanded them not to hinder, so he commandeth parents to do more, to help them to come to him. Christ loves to have little customers come to buy raiment and eye-salve, to have little patients that are sick come to him for cure; and surely if parents do not, who will send those dying children to the physician of souls? Alas! they are no more sensible of their misery than the silly sheep is of what the butcher is doing when he is whetting his knife to cut her throat.

Their helpfulness must principally appear in their care for each other's better part. If they love each other in obedience to God's command, they will love another according to God's command, that is, so as chiefly to endeavour each other's eternal welfare. Spiritual communion together with God will be the best preservative of their affection to each other. They ought to be, like Paul and Aristarchus, 'fellow-helpers unto the kingdom of God,' Col. iv. 10. Oh, what a lovely sight is it to behold husband and wife, like Zachariah and Elizabeth, walking in all the statutes and commandments of the Lord blameless, and as heirs together of the grace of life. Surely when their voices join in singing divine praises, the sound cannot but be pleasing to God himself. When their sweet breath is poured out in prayer, the perfume will be acceptable and scented in heaven.

When God intendeth Adam a wife, he saith, 'I will make an help meet for man,' Gen. ii. 18. They that restrain the words to generation, saith Calvin,[1] do not understand what this conjunction is. Nay, saith Paræus,[2] this was the chiefest cause of a wife in paradise, that she might join with Adam in piety. The Jesuits indeed

[1] Calvin, *in loc.*

[2] Hæc erat in paradiso potissima causa fœminæ.—*Parœus, in loc.*

forbid women to speak of God and his ways, and to meddle only with their distaff. Most women take their counsel, but, as they will find one day to their cost, they live as though they believed what some falsely affirm, that women have no souls.[1] Priscilla is mentioned before her husband, some think, as the forwarder of the two in holiness, Rom. xvi. 3; Acts xviii. 18; 1 Tim. iv. 12. They must be willing to hear each other's counsel, and to bear admonitions from one another;[2] though the wife be somewhat inferior, and must not usurp authority over the man, yet, as the case often falls out, it may be a call from God: 'Hearken to the voice of thy wife,' Gen. xxi. 12, when she meekly and submissively seeks to amend somewhat that is amiss in her husband. How many queens, saith Chrysostom, are buried in silence; whereas Priscilla, a tent-maker's wife, being a fellow-labourer in Christ, is in every one's mouth, and that not ten or twenty years, but until the coming of Christ. Where is now the vainglory of women in tricking up their faces? Learn from this woman what are the true ornaments not sought for on earth, but laid up in heaven. *Hic est ecclesiæ ornatus, ille theatrorum; hic cœlis dignus, ille equis et mulis*, This the ornament of the church, the other, glorious apparel, is for stages; this beseemeth heaven, the other horses and mules.

It is sad when the wife, like Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 21, stirreth up her husband (forward enough of himself) to wickedness. Some women are the choicest arrows the devil hath in his quiver to wound the precious souls of men. Witness Eve. How many daughters hath Job's wife still alive, that provoke their husbands, not to pray and bless, but to curse and blaspheme God! If their husbands, like Moses, obey the precepts of God, they, like Zipporah, will ring a peal in their ears to make them impious or impatient. Certainly they who have met with such wives have cause enough to consent to that of Aristotle, that they have lost half the happiness of their lives. Amongst fish the males are better than the females, except the fish silurus, but it is not always so amongst us; for even many men also, when their wives look heaven-ward, do their utmost to hinder them, and, like the pharisees, are neither willing to go to heaven themselves, nor to suffer others that would. When the wife sometimes, as Pilate's, entreats her husband, who is fiery and furious in persecuting a poor saint, to have nothing to do with that

[1] Lyran., Gorrhan.

[2] Quoniam natura ita tradidit ut nec cum illis (uxoribus) satis commode, nec sine illis ullo modo vivi possit, saluti perpetuæ potius quam brevi voluptati consulendum. —*Agel.*, lib. i. cap. 6.

just man, yet he, against the counsel of his wife, command of his God, and conviction of his own conscience, goeth on to his own destruction.

If the husband sometimes calls to prayer, the wife calls, it may be, to work, or to some foolish pleasure. If the wife, as the Shunammite to the man of God, for the enlivening of her dead son, would go to hear the word of the Lord, for the recovery of her dying soul, and asketh her husband leave, he is as backward as the father of that child, though upon a far worse ground, possibly; Wherefore wilt thou go? to what purpose is so much preaching? I warrant you, you may be saved without so much ado, 2 Kings iv. 23. Thus many that are unequally yoked, like horses in a team that draw contrary ways, are miserably hindered in their journey to heaven. But happy is that couple that, like Elkanah and Hannah, join in giving up their children to God's service, and in going themselves together to sacrifice, 1 Sam. ii. 19; that pair is the blessed pair, that, as a pair of wings to a bird, help one another to fly up to God. These, if any in the world, may say, as those new married in Athens were wont to sing, *Ἔφυγον κἀκον, εὗρον ἄμεινον,* I have left a bad condition, and found a better. Oh, how may such bless the day that ever they met, and at God's call be willing to part, knowing that ere long they shall meet again in honour, never to part more! This husband and wife, like Saul and Jonathan, are lovely in their lives, and after their deaths shall not be divided.

A good wish of a Christian couple, wherein are epitomised the mutual duties of husband and wife.

Marriage being a condition which requireth much circumspection, as it is a relation of the sweetest and nearest communion in this world, ordained by our God, both for the increase of his church, and our mutual comfort, and as it is the first relation in nature, and the original of all the rest, upon the wrong management of which the ruin of the other doth frequently follow; we wish in general that our behaviour in it may never be so void of conscience as to turn it into a cross to ourselves or a curse to others, but that our fellowship together may be such that we may both in it have fellowship with the Father, and with Jesus Christ his Son. Lord, who art the guide of all relations, and the God of all grace, be pleased to grant us affections suitable to our condition, that our

whole carriage therein may be as becometh Christians, and such as are married to the Lord Christ; that as Abraham and Sarah, we may be famous for faith, as Isaac and Rebecca, we may live together in the dearest love; and that, as that pious pair, Zacharias and Elizabeth, we may walk in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord blameless, and we, walking in company, may walk the more cheerfully in the way which leadeth to everlasting life.

We wish, considering how marriage, though a human conjunction, is of divine institution; how the Father appointed it, and that in paradise, and the Son hath approved it by his own glorious presence, that the Spirit with its gracious beams may so overshadow our souls, that many Barnabases, many sons of consolation, may be the issue and effect of our conjugal relation. Oh that we might both reverence this golden relation for his sake whose image and superscription it beareth, and never by our unworthy and unholy conversations deface and defile it! Those that are honoured by a prince will seek to honour him in their places, if they be ingenuous persons. How different is men's carriage, answerable to the difference in their conditions! Lord, since thou hast exalted us, let us never debase thee; though others whom thou hast lifted up make it their business to cast thee down, and the more helps thou affordest them to sweeten their pilgrimage, the more they abound in profaneness; yet let thy goodness to us be improved by us for thy glory, and let us be holy as thou, who hast called us to this relation, art holy, in all manner of conversation.

We wish that the meditation of each other's frailty may quicken us to greater fidelity, especially in the immediate concernment of eternity. The next arrow which death shoots may light upon one of us, and our relation will die with us; though now it shineth pleasantly and refresheth us with its warm rays, yet it will shortly set and never arise more; and then, oh then, we shall never have the least season to advantage each other's souls, or to further one another's salvation. Oh that this weighty thought might sink so deep into our hearts, that we may pray the more frequently and the more fervently for and with one another, because within a few days we shall never pray more; that we may persuade and admonish one another the more seriously and the more affectionately, because within a few days we shall never do it more; that we may in our several places work the work of him that sent us into the world whilst it is day, because the night cometh wherein neither of us can work. Lord, make us so mindful of our deaths, that we may be the more faithful in our duties; and whatsoever our hands find to

do, in reference to thy praise, and our eternal peace, let us do it with all our might, because there is no knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave, whither we are both going.

We wish that the covenant which we have solemnly entered into each with other, before God, angels, and men, may be like that which the Jews entered into with the Lord, Jer. l. 5, 'an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten.' If we forget our God, and deal falsely in his covenant, he will search it out, for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. Why should we, as young gallants, enter into bonds, never minding them more till the day of payment be past, and the serjeant of death be ready to arrest us, and haul us to the prison of hell! Should we, as the harlot, forget the covenant of our God, he would remember it to our loss and ruin; if it be dangerous to break the covenant of a man, that vengeance from heaven hath often fallen on their heads; how dreadful is it to break the covenant of a God! His curse hath broken in upon many a couple for breaking his covenant. Oh that all our action in this relation might be so answerable to the gospel, that our God may never have cause to complain of us, as once of Israel, 'What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?' Lord, help us, as persons in debt that are honest, to be so mindful of our bonds, that we may be careful to discharge them in the performance of the conditions, and let the consideration thereof be an impregnable bulwark, to defend us against all the assaults which the flesh or world shall make to draw us from our duties.

We wish, since by a married condition we are more remote from our parents' care, which formerly was our haven, and are launched into the ocean of this world, in which we must expect to be tossed up and down with storms and tempests, that we may be diligent to make God our guide, and Scripture our compass, to prevent our perishing. They who have trouble in the flesh, had need to live after the Spirit. If it be foul under foot, it will be but ill travelling if it be not fair over-head. How sad will it be to have storms on our heads, and no cover! to have qualms come over our hearts, and no cordial! to have afflictions, sickness, nay death, in our house, and to have the God of all consolations, and the Lord of life, far from our house! Oh that, whatever stony or dirty ways providence may call us to walk in on earth, yet we may so walk by rule, as to enjoy a comfortable sunshine from heaven! Lord, let us so own thee in prosperity, that thou mayest own us in adversity; let us be so careful to keep good consciences, that in all estates thou mayest be our

comfort, going before us as our cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, to direct and cheer us in our passage through this wilderness, till we come to Canaan.

We wish that our affections may be as close as our relation; and since our God hath tied this knot with his own blessed hands betwixt us, we may never so much as in angry thoughts, much less in wrangling deeds, do anything which may tend to loosen it. We are one flesh, why should we not have one spirit? What a dreadful, doleful spectacle is a house in a flame! What a blessed, blissful sight is a family of love! When bells clash and jangle, how harsh and displeasing is their noise! when they keep tune and time, how harmonious and grateful is their sound! Oh that our house may be a church, and its name Philadelphia, or brotherly love, and that we especially, who are the chief in it, may be like Jerusalem —compact together, and at unity within ourselves; that all our thoughts of each other may be sweetened with love, and all our words to each other seasoned with love; and that in our actions towards each other, love, as a simple of a predominant quality, may give a relish and savour to them all! Our Redeemer, who hath given us this precept, and set himself for our pattern, is love; his name is love, his nature is love, his sacraments are seals of love, his Spirit is the earnest of love, his Scripture is his letter of love, his providences are all written in the characters of love; his ordinances are love's banqueting-house, wherein his banner over us is love. He hath commanded us, as we are Christians, Eph. v. 1, 2, to be 'followers of him as dear children, and to walk in love, as he hath loved us.' Oh then, what love should we have each to other! how close should we cleave in our affections, who are bound together by God himself, both with the bond of religion and relation, and are provoked to it by such loving precepts, and such a lively pattern! Surely such cords should not be easily broken. Love is the bond of perfection, and the perfection of all bonds; it is the perfect bond which will tie all our duties and graces together, without which they will fall asunder. 'Behold, how good and how pleasant is it for husband and wife to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore,' Ps. cxxxiii. Oh that love may be our strength, wherewith we may bear one another's burdens; that love may be our mantle, wherewith we may cover one another's infirmities; and that

love, like the fire in Elijah's trench, may lick up all the water of opposition which may ever arise between us! Lord, who art the God of love, let thy Spirit so kindle and increase this heavenly flame in our hearts, that we may be always ascending up unto thee in love of desire, and for thy sake be carried out towards each other, with unfeigned and constant love of delight. Though others, who live always quarrelling, curse their wedding-day more than Job did his birthday, and desire a divorce as earnestly as he did death, let our lives be so sweetened with love, that, from the comfort of it, we long the more for our meeting together in heaven with thyself, and amongst all thy saints.

We wish that faithfulness may be the girdle about both our loins, which may keep us close each to other, and to our duties, notwithstanding all attempts by the flesh and devil to part us asunder. Our interests are the same—we are equal sharers both in gains and losses; neither can rise by the other's ruin, but we stand and fall together. Oh that what wealth our God hath given us through his providence may never be wasted through our prodigality; but as those that trade in a joint stock, we may be equally solicitous, and, in the use of lawful means, industrious for its preservation and increase. Why should we be so foolish as to steal from ourselves either goods or good name, when the treasure and honour of both are embarked in the same bottom? Surely it behoves us to join in our diligence; ordinary thieves are unrighteous in wronging others, but we, if unfaithful, are unnatural in robbing ourselves. Lord, make us so faithful about the unrighteous mammon, that thou mayest trust us with the true riches; but let us be more tender of each other's reputation than of the apple of our own eyes, and to imitate thy Majesty in covering and forgiving one another's infirmities. Let neither of our bodies be sinks of uncleanness, but temples of holiness; learn us so to possess our vessels in sanctification and honour, that the very thoughts of dishonesty may be more dreadful to us than death itself. Why should we make thy house Satan's harlot? Can we imagine that our Saviour, because his bodily presence was once in an unclean stable, will vouchsafe his spiritual presence in an impure body? Do not we expect that our bodies should outshine the sun in glory and purity at the last day? And shall they resemble ditches for dirt and defilement at this day! Oh that we might never, like an adulterer and an adulteress, either in soul or body go a-whoring from thee, but that all the members of our bodies may be instruments of righteousness, and all the faculties of our souls set apart for thy service, that

hereafter both soul and body may be satisfied fully with thy salvation.

We wish that, as head and body, we may conspire for each other's welfare; and as we are one flesh, so we might have one spirit in seeking its real comfort, and endeavouring its lawful contentment. Domestical burdens will be more tolerable if we put under both our shoulders; personal hardships will be more acceptable whilst we conjoin in our help; the potion which is most bitter will go down the better if each drink a part. Oh that, as fellow-commoners, we might always eat of the same dish, whether sour or sweet; and since we are fellow-travellers, cheer up one another, to make our journey the more pleasant, till we come to rest in the true paradise! The head and body do not stand out against each other in terms of defiance. Christ and his church do not rise up in arms against each other in a warlike fashion. Lord, help us in our family affairs to live as those that draw in the same yoke, and in all our civil and natural concernments to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

We wish, above all things, that we may, with the greatest faithfulness, be serviceable to each other's souls; and whilst others conspire together to indulge their flesh, and like Ananias and Sapphira, to tempt God, we may conspire together to live after the Spirit, and with the greatest advantage to exercise ourselves to godliness, that we may both, like the two cherubims, look one to another, and both towards thy mercy-seat. And oh do thou, who sittest between the cherubims, meet us, and commune with us now, that at last we may meet at thy seat of mercy. Yet a little while and the light is with us; yet a little while and we may pray together, and we may fast together, and we may read together; within a few days the shadows of the evening will stretch themselves upon us, and it will be no longer day with us. Oh that we might be so far from living like those beasts, who mind little save bedding and boarding together, that we may, like angels, always stand in God's presence, and join in admiring his boundless perfections! Lord, let us not, like Herod and Herodias, join together against thy saints; nor, as Herod and Pilate, agree together against our Saviour, lest at last we burn together in the unquenchable fire. But let us take sweet counsel together, and go often to the house of God, and to the throne of grace in company; and do thou so assist us, that our house now may be a Bethel, none other than the house of God; and when this fast knot betwixt us shall be untied by the king of terrors, we may be more closely united to the King of saints, in that

place where there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage, but all are as angels, bathing their souls in the rivers of thy pleasures, and warming their hearts in thy bosom and embraces. Oh, if there be such a help in a fit spouse, what a heaven is there in marriage to thy dear Son! If converse with flesh and blood yield such comfort, what infinite delight, and unconceivable consolation will flow from immediate, uninterrupted, and eternal communion with thy blessed self! Oh, blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the lamb!

Lord, enable us (husband and wife) to shine as the sun and moon, and our children and servants as stars, so gloriously and powerfully with the light of holiness, that our house may be thy lesser heaven, and that when we have finished our courses, by declaring thy glory in our several relations, and shewing forth thy spiritual handiworks in our whole conversations, we may be elevated to those higher orbs, and heavenly mansions, where we shall never set, be eclipsed, or clouded; where the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days; where the crosses and encumbrances of all relations shall be removed, and the true comfort only of them all remain, yea, where the light of all relations shall be swallowed up, as the lesser celestial lights in the sun, in our great relation to God through Christ. For there 'the sun shall no more be our light by day, nor the moon our light by night, but the Lord our God, our everlasting light, and our God our glory.' Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of husbands, with a good wish about the husband's duty.

I proceed from the mutual to the special duties, and I shall begin with the husband.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, mind holiness in it. Thou art above thy wife in place, oh be above her in piety! The higher the air is, the purer it is; the higher thou art, the holier thou shouldst be. The highest spheres carry about with them the inferior orbs by their celerity. Thou shouldst draw thy wife and children along with thee to Christ by thy exemplary sanctity. Do not say that thy marriage hindereth thy holiness, for by it thou hast more advantage to promote religion in thy family.

Indeed, thy marriage to the flesh and body of death, not to a wife, is that, if anything, which will make thee wicked.

As thou art a husband, thou art intrusted with a weighty talent; thou hast the government and guidance of thy wife committed to thee. Oh be faithful in the management of so great a trust. Let thy dominion be exercised with discretion, lest by thy foolish fondness it be liable to contempt, or by thy rigorous severity it degenerate into cruelty. Wisdom must sit at the stern of thy authority, and so guide it in an even course, that it may neither dash upon the rock of scorn, nor sink in the quicksand of slavish fear. There are two principal affections which God requireth in thy wife in relation to thee,—reverence and love. Now, thy prudence must so manage thy authority, that these two may be preserved in their due place, and not interfere and cut each other; that her fear of thee may not, through thy severity, be turned into hatred, nor her love to thee, through thy familiarity, be turned into slighting thee. On the one hand, take heed that through thy folly thou dost not cause her to contemn thee; let not thy carriage be childish, lest she think thee fitter for a rod than to rule over her. A ridiculous husband will never command an awful fear in his wife. He that goeth in a fool's coat, or playeth antic tricks, will sooner make the spectators laugh at and deride him, than honour and reverence him. A giddy head will force the body to stumble and fall. On the other hand, beware of rigidness, lest she hate thee; do not, as a fly, seek for a sore place, some weakness in thy wife, to fasten on. It is the part of an enemy to look up and down to spy where the wall is lowest, that he may enter thereat and conquer the city. Some husbands are full of those cutting expressions, I'll make you know that I am master: Do such a thing, or you shall repent it dearly: I'll bring your proud heart down with a vengeance,—language usual to a Turkish galley-slave; but surely, if masters should forbear threatening to a servant, much more husbands to a wife, Col. iv. 1, 2. It is far better to reign in her heart by clemency, than to rule over her body by tyranny. A wise soldier will choose to bring a rebellious city into subjection by terms of peace, if it may be, rather than by batteries of war. And wilt thou, as the Egyptians did over the Israelites, rule with rigour over thy wife, and make her groan to heaven by reason of her bondage? Truly such a churl, as the cramp, racks his own sinews, and makes his own body full of torment. He that screweth the string of his power too high, will

break it before he is aware. To overtax subjects is the way to make a poor king. So much in general.

The special duties enjoined the husband are three.

First, Affection. Among the three worthies, this is the first and the chief of the three. It is observable that the Holy Ghost mentioneth this duty frequently and urgently, and that as it were the only duty enjoined the husband: 'Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them,' Eph. v. 25, 28, 33; Col. iii. 19. Partly because husbands are most defective in this duty.[1] Generally men are diligent in the exercise of their dominion, but negligent in regard of affection; hence their authority degenerateth into tyranny. Partly because this duty will exceedingly help to the performance of all the rest. The husband must bear his wife's burdens, cover her infirmities;[2] but it is love only which hath the strong back that can do this. The husband must defend her from dangers—spread his skirt, his wing over her, Ruth iii. 9, as birds do over their young to preserve them from harm; but it is love only is the shield to bear off those blows. The husband must comfort her under crosses, sympathising with her in her sufferings, and cheering her with his courteous carriage; but without the ingredient of love, no cordial can be made.[3] The husband must provide for her body and external good, and take care of her soul and eternal good; but without the weights of love, he will not move regularly either way. Love is the key that opens the door into every duty; love is the fulfilling of the whole law.

The formation of the woman out of man, sheweth how great his affection should be to her, nay, to himself. She was not made of his head, to be his sovereign, nor of his feet, to be his slave; but of a rib in his side, to shew how near she should lie to his heart. God is so urgent for fervent love to a wife that he slights the husband's love to her when it is but little, and counts it no

[1] In ea sæpe deficimus, licit dominii satis studiosi.—*Aret. in Eph.* v.

[2] Caritas amat quos tolerat, tolerat quos amat.—*Greg. Mag. in Ezek.*

[3] Rationes cur diligendæ sunt uxores. 1. Quia sunt fœminæ; natura impellit marem ad fœminam diligendam. 2. Quia uxores; hæc ratio fortior est, quia est Dei ordinatio, et restringit amorem ad certam aliquam. 3. Quia Christus suo exemplo amandas esse docuit. 4. Quia uxor est corpus viri.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v.

better than hatred.[1] 'And when God saw that Leah was hated,' Gen. xxix. 31. It is not enough, saith Calvin on the text, that a man do not hate his wife, but God expecteth that he should heartily love her. Because Jacob's love was not so hot as it ought, God calls it hatred. It is sad when the husband is so cross and crabbed, that his house is a prison to his wife, himself her jailer, and his commands little else than fetters to gall and gore her flesh. It is said of the turtle dove that he loves his mate exceedingly; when she dieth, he continually pines and moans, and will never after sit upon a green bough. It is certain the love of a husband to his wife should be above his love to all his relations. Next God and Christ, and his own salvation, his wife calls for the hottest and strongest affection. 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife,' Gen. ii. 18. A man ought to have a greater respect for his father and mother than any persons in the world; yet even these must be left, out of love to his wife. The words are not to be understood so much that he must leave them in regard of habitation, according to Mercer and the Chaldee reading,[2] he shall leave his father and mother's bed, (it being a Jewish custom for unmarried children to lie in their parents' chambers,) but in regard of affection; yet not that he ceaseth to be a son when he once becometh a husband, for his reverence, obedience, and recompense are still due to his father—but, 1. Comparatively; he is rather to leave them than his wife, for his love to his wife must be so great that in comparison of it he may be said to leave his parents. 2. Conditionally; if his parents shall seek to draw him from his wife. So Musculus.

Therefore the Holy Ghost calleth a wife 'the wife of thy bosom,' Deut. xiii. 6, because of the extraordinary love which thou oughtest to have to her. Those things which we put in our bosoms are fervently affected. The disciple whom Jesus loved leaned usually on his bosom, John xiii. 23, with xx. 2. Christ, the beloved of the Father, is said to be 'in the bosom of the Father.' The husband must 'love his wife as himself,' Eph. v. 33; not as the phrase is used when it is said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' *i.e.*, that he must love her with the same quality and sincerity of love; but it is meant with the same quantity and fervency of love. His love to his wife must not only be of the same nature, but also

[1] Non debet autem viro dominari uxor; ideo non est sumpta ex capite; nec etiam pedibus conculcari; ideo pedibus non est creata; sed debet amari ex corde ideo de costa cordi vicina sumpta est.—*Zanch. in Eph.* v.

[2] Relinquet cubile patris et matris.—*Chaldee.*

in the same measure with his love to himself. Oh, how dear is a man to himself! how tenderly, how constantly, how fervently doth he love himself! none can persuade him to be out of love with himself; if he be deformed or diseased, yet he loves himself: truly thus should his love be to his wife. 'None ever yet hated his own flesh,' saith the apostle, Eph. v. 29. We hear of some men that are cruel to themselves, that cut and tear their own flesh; but they are Baalites, 1 Kings xviii. 21, or Bedlamites.

Reader, if thou art one of those that abusest thy wife this way, remember that, like the man in the Gospel possessed with a devil, thou woundest thyself. Surely if Scripture will not allow thee to be bitter to thy wife, it will not allow thee to beat her. He that is bitter to his wife puts off the human nature, (to be human is to be courteous. Hence I 'will draw thee with the bands of love, with the cords of a man,' *i.e.*, of gentleness and mildness,) and if he that is bitter unmans himself, what doth he do that beats his wife?[1] Surely he is a monk or a madman in beating himself. Socrates could say, For a man to beat his wife was as great a sacrilege as to profane the most holy things in the world. It is said of Dr Cowper, that when his wife had burnt all his notes, which he had been eight years in gathering, for fear he should kill himself with study—for she could scarce get him to his meals—he shewed no passion, but duly uttered this expression, Indeed, wife, it was not well done.

Thy love should make thee moderate in all thy commands; nothing should be enjoined but what is both needful to be done, and fit for her to do. Thy wife is the weaker vessel, and therefore not to be put to servile labours.[2] If a knife, saith Luther, hath a tender edge, men will not cut hard stones with it. Oh, what will not that man do or suffer for his wife that loves her as he ought! Shechem denied not to be circumcised, because he loved Dinah. Jacob served seven years out of love to Rachel. Love beareth much, and forbeareth also. Where it is otherwise, that the husband is crabbed and churlish, there the virgin may complain, in the words of Ambrose,[3] My money hath sold me to misery, and is the dear price of my slavery. The dominion of a man over his wife is not that of a master over his slave, but such as the soul hath over the body; not for its hurt, but for its help, to further

[1] Uxor admonenda persæpe, reprehendenda raro, verberanda nunquam.—*Aurelii dictum.*

[2] Uxoris vitium aut tollendum aut tolerandum.—*Varro. in Gel.*

[3] Amb., Exhort. ad Virg.

its welfare; or like that of the apostle over the churches committed to him by the Lord, for edification, and not for destruction, 2 Cor. x. 8.

'Let all things be done in charity,' saith the apostle. If all thy actions towards others, then much more all things that concern thy wife, should be done in love. Thy thoughts should be thoughts of love, thy looks should be looks of love; thy lips, like the honeycomb, should drop nothing but sweetness and love; thy instructions should be edged with love; thy reprehensions should be sweetened with love; thy carriage and whole conversation towards her should be but the fruit and demonstration of thy love. Oh how did Christ, who is thy pattern, love his spouse! His birth, life, and death were but, as it were, a stage whereon the hottest love imaginable, from first to last, acted its part to the life. It was a known, unknown love. Tiberius Gracchus the Roman, finding two snakes in his bed, and consulting with the soothsayers, was told that one of them must be killed; yet, if he killed the male, he himself would die shortly; if the female, his wife would die. His love to his wife Cornelia was so great that he killed the male, saith Plut. in Vit., and died quickly.

The wise man tells us, 'Let her be to thee as the loving hind or roe'—the males of which, according to naturalists, are most enamoured with their mates—'and be thou ravished with her love,' Prov. v. 19. Do thou, as Christ in his spouse, Zeph. iii. 17, rest in her love;[1] desire no more; for it is not the having a wife, but the loving a wife, will make a chaste husband. Therefore the wise man presently subjoineth, 'For why shouldst thou delight, my son, in a strange woman?' Prov. v. 20; but the Hebrew readeth it, Do thou err in thy love, so as to wink at many weaknesses in thy wife; for love, we say, is blind; and so affectionately to desire her, and to delight in her, that others may think thee to doat on her. Therefore the husband among the Romans, saith Aul. Gel., gave a ring unto his wife, which she was to wear on the next finger to the little of the left hand, because unto that finger alone a certain artery from the heart proceedeth.

2. Instruction and admonition. Love to the wife's soul is the very soul of the husband's love; without this all his love is dead and unsavoury. Reader, if thy care be only for thy wife's body, what dost thou more than heathen? if thou mindest nothing but her outward comfort, dost thou not as much for thy cattle? If thy love, as it ought, be grounded on spiritual respects, it will shew itself in spiritual effects. Be sure thou dost not engage her

[1] Ἀγαπᾶσθαι, quasi ἀγαν πάνεσθαι, quia amans quiescit in re amata.

in sin. Abraham, though a good man, did yet seduce his wife to dissemble for his sake, Gen. xx. 13. What a grief would it be to thee for thy wife to die of that disease which thou broughtest home to her! Be also diligent to teach her the duty she oweth to God. Possibly she understandeth not the word of God, and may say to thee, as the eunuch to Philip, 'How can I, except some man guide me?'

Surely it is not for nothing that the apostle commandeth wives to 'learn of their husbands at home,' 1 Cor. xiv. 35; but, alas! how should they learn, when their husbands, through their wilful ignorance, cannot, or, through their cursed wickedness, will not, instruct them? God enjoins them to dwell with their wives as men of knowledge, 1 Pet. iii. 7; but many dwell with them as men of ignorance, or rather as brutes, as if they were met merely to graze and couple together, to bed and board together. God calleth the husband the 'guide of his wife,' Prov. ii. 17, because he should instruct and direct her in the way of life; but sad it is most husbands are 'blind guides,' that lead their wives in those 'ways that go down to death, and those steps which take hold of hell.' It may be the body of thy wife is so dear to thee, that thou canst not endure to think of her disgrace, or poverty, or sickness, or death; but all this while thou never thinkest, it may be, of her soul, whether that be in bondage to Satan, or a servant to Christ—in a state of damnation or salvation. Alas! this love is merely carnal.

The husband is called the 'head of the wife,' not only in regard of his dominion, (the head is above the body,) but also in regard of direction. The head directs the body; the head directs both the feet to walk and the hands to work; it seeth and understandeth for the whole body. Possibly thy wife is ignorant or atheistical: 'What knowest thou, O man, but thou mayest save thy wife!' 1 Cor. vii. 16. Thy duty is to resemble Christ; his church came out of his side, as Eve out of Adam's; but the chief care of Christ was to sanctify and cleanse his church; he came by blood to take away the guilt, and he comes by water to take away the filth of her sins. Oh, how industrious shouldst thou be, both in prayer to God, and instructions to thy wife, that her sins may be pardoned, and her soul purified, and that at last she may be presented to Christ in his own righteousness, 'a glorious spouse, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing!' How is it possible thou canst let thy beloved wife, the wife of thy bosom, to destroy her soul by wickedness, and neglect her Saviour and salvation, and not so much as tell her of it? O friend, where is thy love to thy wife? There are husbands

that will give their wives a sermon willingly when they are dead, who never cared that they should hear any sermons, or gave them the least heavenly and serious instruction, whilst they were living; but, alas! it is a sign they never had any true love to them. Such men's wives have more cause than Samson's to weep on the very day of their wedding.

If thy wife sin against God, thy duty is to admonish her, though mildly. Consider what the fault is. We do not go to surgeons for every sore; some will heal of themselves; but sin must not be suffered in any, much less in one that is so near thee. The nearer the fire is to thy own house, the sin is to thy own soul, the more dangerous. Job, that was one of heaven's worthies for the fear of God, surely was not wanting in love to his wife; yet, when she acted by the devil, twits him in the teeth with his integrity, and bids him spit his venom in the face of God for requiting him so hardly for all his holiness; mark how a holy impatience triumphs in this pattern of patience! I am persuaded her words did more pierce his soul, and make deeper wounds, than all the great artillery which Satan had discharged against him: 'Thou speakest like one of the foolish women; shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil? Thy speech is unsavoury, and infinitely below a saint: shall we who have received so many comforts be unwilling to bear some crosses from God? when we have had so many clear days, shall we presently curse him for sending a few cloudy days?' Thus he rebukes her, not as some passionate men do their wives, with rage, but with reason.

Two things are considerable in all admonitions to thy wife.

(1.) That they be given privately. To do it publicly before children and servants is likelier to provoke than to profit. Besides, it will make her contemptible to her family, and thereby they will be emboldened to reject her authority.

(2.) That they be delivered patiently, not with passions. Thy admonitions may, as one saith, be warm;—such physic will work the better,—but not scalding hot. If once thou despisest her person, expect that she should despise thy reprehensions. Remember always that she is thy companion and yoke-fellow, drawing with thee, though on the left hand, and sometimes unevenly. Be sure thou do it not publicly. We dress wounds in secret, not in the market. He is but a fool that, like a foul and full stomach, emptieth himself against his wife whoever standeth by. Nor passionately, with taunting, bitter language. If she taste thy reproof bitter, she will spit it out, not take it down.

3. Provision. The Jewish wives might challenge three things from their husbands as due debts: 1. Food; 2. Apparel; 3. Cohabitation, or the right of the bed, which they draw from Exod. xxi. 10, where it is said, 'If he take him another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.' It is most wicked for a husband that hath it to let his wife, which is himself, want. 'No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as the Lord his church,' Eph. v. 29. It is well observed by Zanchy,[1] under these two words, *ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει*, nourisheth and cherisheth, are properly understood food by the first, and raiment by the second; and improperly, by a synecdoche, are all things included that belong to this life. The latter word expresseth, saith Aretius,[2] the solicitousness and tenderness of a husband in providing for his wife, it being a metaphor from a bird, that sitteth on her eggs, or hovereth with her wings over her young, to keep them warm.

Reader, thy duty is to provide such conveniences for her as are suitable to her relation, and thy quality and condition. Thy wife hath left her father and mother, and all her friends, who were tender of her, for thee, and what a loss will she be at, if she do not find these all in thee? The heathen poet,[3] describing a husband, tells us *πατὴρ μὲν γὰρ ἐστιν αὐτῇ καὶ πότνια μητὴρ, ἠδὲ κασίγνητος*, that he should be both father and mother to his wife.

Naturalists observe of the pie, that he beats away his mate about autumn, lest he should be forced to keep her all the winter, and is fitly made the hieroglyphic of an unkind husband. 'The Lord grant,' saith Naomi, 'that each of you may find rest in the house of her husband,' Ruth i. 9. Rest, not rigour; courtesy, not cruelty; a competent maintenance, not a niggardly allowance, is expected in the house of a husband. Whilst thou livest, let her maintenance be according to thy wealth. Thou wilt not, possibly, under-keep thy cattle, and why shouldst thou under-keep thy wife? When thou diest, let her be left so that she may live like thy wife; and do not, as one saith, beat her when thou art dead, by causing her, through thy churlishness, to want, or to hang upon the cradle. Jesus Christ gave his church his own flesh, rather than she should want food, and his own robes, rather than she should want raiment.

[1] Omnia vitæ necessaria ad duo referuntur, ad alimenta et ad vestimenta. Primum exprimit verbo *ἐκτρέφειν*, alterum verbo *θάλπειν*. Sic idem apostolus omnia necessaria ad hanc vitam, duobus nominibus complexus est, 1 Tim. vi. 8. Est tamen synecdoche, quia iis continentur alia quoque quæ ad idem pertinent.—*Zanch., in loc.*

[2] In illo verbo cura exprimitur; significat enim more gallinæ incubare, et calore fœtum partui idoneum reddere.—*Aret. in* Eph. v.

[3] Homer.

Surely that head, husband, wants wit, that suffereth the body, his wife, to go hungry or naked. Christ took great care of his spouse when he was dying; then his love shewed itself in all his colours. Friends at parting shew most kindness. The love of a husband to his wife must outlast this life. He must not, when dying, so much remember that he is a father, as to forget that he is a husband, but mind the root before the branches.

In all her troubles thy duty is to be tender of her. When Hannah was perplexed for her want of children, how affectionately doth Peninnah persuade her: 'Why weepest thou? Why is thine heart troubled? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?' 1 Sam. i. 8. So be thou her comfort, not as many are, her corrosive.

He that considereth how uneasy the wife's yoke is—she conceiveth with much sorrow; carrieth her burden up and down in her womb, many times with great trouble; brings it forth into the world with so much pain that a mother once said, I had rather die in battle ten times over than bring forth but once only,[1] (hence the hieron pella,[2] that bringeth forth with such pain that the blood trickleth out of her eyes, is the emblem of a woman in travail); and brings up her child with no small care and grief, losing many hours' sleep in the night, and much comfort in the day, to suckle and tend it; besides, how she meets with many unkindnesses and provocations from children and servants more than the man, being constantly amongst them—he, I say, that considereth these things wisely and seriously, cannot but be convinced that he ought not to rule over her with rigour, but to make her condition as comfortable as he can, both by nourishing and cherishing her whilst he is with her, and providing for her sufficiently, to the utmost of his power, when God shall take him from her. But, alas! where are the husbands that bear that affection to their wives, that pray and discourse piously with their wives, and that make that provision for their wives which God and conscience command them? Surely, if Diogenes were alive, he might take his candle and lantern again at noonday, and go into our market-places to find out a man a good husband.

Thus, reader, I have finished what I intended to offer thee in reference to this relation. Shall I persuade thee to love thy wife cordially, to instruct her constantly, and to provide for her competently, and all out of conscience to God's command? Oh, it is thy privilege that thou mayest be honouring and serving thy Maker, which is thy husband! Whilst thou art honouring and serving

[1] Decies in bello mori mallem quam parere vel semel adhuc.—*Medea in Eurip.*

[2] Qu., 'heron (pelargos)'?—*Ed.*

thy wife, do not, as many, who, because they are married to a wife, give a bill of divorce to godliness; like him in the Scripture, who, being invited with others to a costly supper, Luke xiv. 20, returned of them all the worst answer, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' The other guests were mannerly: 'I pray thee have me excused,' saith the purchaser, ver. 18; 'I pray thee have me excused,' saith the other, ver. 19; but this is peremptory, 'I cannot come.' The others plead an inconveniency—they could not well attend the feast because of their farms; but this pleads an utter impossibility, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' There was in the carnal judgment of the two former some discommodity in going; but in the cursed opinion of this latter, an absolute necessity of staying away. Oh, monstrous ingratitude, to abuse that to a curse, and to turn it into poison, which God bestowed as a great comfort and choice blessing!

Reader, remember that God hath not given thee thy wife, as Saul did Michal to David, to be a snare to thee, that at last he might slay thee, but to be Milchah, a woman of counsel to thee in the best things, that he might save thee; therefore 'dwell with thy wife as a man of knowledge, giving honour to her as the weaker vessel, as heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered,' 1 Pet. iii. 7.

A good wish about a husband's duty, wherein the former particulars are epitomised.

The relation of a husband, speaking both my dignity, that I am the head of my wife, and my duty, to study and design, as the head doth for the body, her comfort and welfare, I wish in general that I may never be so mindful of my dominion as to forget those duties which my God hath annexed to this relation; but that, as I am higher in honour, so I may also be above her in holiness, able and faithful to guide and instruct her in the path to happiness. Lord, let me never be of their number who will be figures to stand before their wives in the concernments of this world, but are cyphers alone, standing for nothing in the affairs of the other world; but enable me to carry myself as one espoused to Christ in this relation of a husband, helping her in my place and to my power in the things that relate to this life, but especially affording her my utmost assistance, that she may attain the inheritance of the saints in light.

I wish that, as my God is ever faithful in his covenant to me, so I may be always mindful of my covenants to him. All his ways to me are mercy and truth; his faithfulness never faileth. Though heaven and earth pass away, yet not a tittle of his word shall be unfulfilled. All his words are oaths for their certainty, and all his promises are the sure mercies of David. Shall I be false to him who is so fast to me? If it be unlawful to deceive a man who deludes me, how sinful is it to be unfaithful to my God, who is thus faithful to me? If he who telleth lies shall in nowise enter into heaven, how certainly shall I, if I foreswear myself, be cast into hell? Lord, cause me so to consider that my wedding bond to my wife hath thee for a witness, and to this day is in thine hand, that I may never give thee cause to put it in suit in thy court of justice, and to take its forfeiture by my dealing treacherously with my companion, and the wife of my covenant.

I wish that the thought of my dissolution may make me the more holy in this relation, that because I must shortly die and leave her, I may therefore do the more good to her, and receive the more good from her, whilst I live and enjoy her. My life, alas! is but a small spot of time; now a flood, by and by an ebb, and then I launch into the ocean of eternity. Now I live, anon I die, and then I must answer for my carriage in this condition. Oh that the consideration of my particular reckoning may cause me to be the more religious, that I may be the more heavenly in all my converses with my wife, because I must shortly lie down in the earth! Lord, since I must within a few days put off the garment of this relation, which is now my comfort and ornament, let thy Spirit so embroider it with grace, and enable me so to perfume it with myrrh, aloes, and cassia, that when I shall be unclothed I may not be found naked, but clothed with my house that is from heaven.

I wish that love may act its part lively in every passage of this relation, and that my heart may be seen in my hand—I mean, my affection be visible in all my actions towards her, that though I might be much bold in Christ, as Paul wrote to Philemon, ver. 8, to enjoin her that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I may rather entreat her. How sad is her condition, by reason of sin! Surely she may say, in the words of Hannah, 'I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit.' She conceiveth with sorrow, bringeth forth with much pain, and in bringing up her children often misseth of desired pleasure. Her fears disquiet her in the night, and her cares disturb her in the day. Her sons are possibly Benonis, sons of her sorrows, and her servants Barabbases, sons of confusion. Through

her whole life the yoke of subjection is on her neck, and shall I rule over her with rigour, Mal. ii. 13, adding affliction to the afflicted, and wounding one whom God hath wounded? Should I cause her to sigh, by reason of her bondage, and to compass the Lord's altar about with tears and weeping, her cry would go up to heaven, for God hath a tender respect for oppressed wives, as well as afflicted widows, and he would bring some judgment on me to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. Oh let me never, like a Nabal, tyrannise and trample on my wife, as if she were my footstool, when God hath made her my fellow, and making her life, like the Israelites sojourning in Marah, full of mourning and murmuring, crying and complaining; but let her be to me, as Ezekiel's wife to him, the delight of mine eyes, and as the church to Christ, Cant. iv. 9, the ravisher of my heart, that I may always cheer her affectionately, and cherish her tenderly, as the Lord the church.

The comfort of my life doth not a little depend upon my love to my wife. If I, like Lamech, carry myself fiercely and furiously as a lion, if she be as meek as a lamb, my house may degenerate from a society of civil men into a den of savage and ravenous beasts. Oh what a sad resemblance of hell is a brawling, cursing house! Though my wife be as cold as a flint, for me to be always, as steel, grating on her, will at last bring forth fire, and, behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! If the chief strings in the viol jar, the music is all marred. Why should I, by my passion, turn my house, which should be a Bethel, into a Babel of confusion? 1 Kings xix. 11, My God delights not to manifest himself in blustering winds, or in frightful earthquakes, but in a still, low voice. If my house be in a flame, I undo myself by forcing away my best friend; but if I live in love and peace, the God of love and peace will live with me. Lord, who hast appointed this holy ordinance, the first that ever was under heaven, to be some poor resemblance of that sweet communion which thine shall have in heaven one with another, and all, with thy dear self and Son; give me some knowledge of that love thou bearest to me, and of that delight I shall one day have in thee, by that love I bear to, and that delight I have in, her whom thou hast given into my bosom. Thou hast commanded me to love my wife as Christ loveth his spouse. My Saviour's love is chaste; there is not the least shadow of impurity in any of his commands. His love is constant. Having loved his own, he loves them to the end. Death itself could not burst asunder the cords of his love. His love is fervent; he was nothing else but a lump of love. His desire is to her, and his

whole delight is in her. He passeth by all others as nettles and thorns, but she is in his eye the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. Oh that my soul might in these things follow my dearest Saviour! My God hath told me that I must love my wife as myself. My love to myself is hot, above that to any other in the world. How tender am I of myself under any malady! how pitiful towards myself in any misery! how patient towards myself when I discover many infirmities! My love to myself is hearty. None ever was false in his love to himself, though many be feigned in their love to others. Lord, help me, that my love to her whom I call *My love* may be perfect, like Jonathan's to David; that my heart may be knit to her, and I may love her as my own soul; and since she hath left father, mother, brother, and sister for me, she may find the affection of all those relations, and far more, in me. And let my love be perpetual; let not its complexion be like aguish bodies, sometimes burning hot, and at other times shivering cold, but, as the sun, let it always be going forth in its full strength; and oh that to this end it might be pure love, not for lust or lucre, but whereas others love the wealth, I may love the wife; whereas others love portions and comeliness only, I may love her person and her godliness chiefly, and that because thou, O fairest of ten thousands, whose lovely image is beautiful in her, hast commanded and commended it.

I wish that my love to my wife may be like Christ's to his church, as well in its goodness as in its greatness; I mean, that my chiefest endeavour may be that she may be sanctified and cleansed, and at last be presented to the blessed and beautiful bridegroom, a gracious and glorious spouse, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Oh how industriously did my Redeemer endeavour his church's renovation and sanctity! how affectionately doth he beseech her to be holy! how fervently doth he beg of his Father to make her holy! how willingly did he broach his heart, and pour out his blood to wash her from her unholiness! how plentifully doth he pour down his Spirit to work her to holiness! His birth was that she might be born again, and born holy; his life was to set her a copy of holiness; his death was to purchase for her a new stock of holiness. He 'gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' His precepts, his prayers, his tears, his blood, his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, his intercession, are all for her holiness and purity. His name is called Jesus, because he saves his people, not in, but from, their sins and unholiness. He doth not think himself perfect till his body be in heaven. O my soul, when

wilt thou imitate this lovely, lively pattern, and work hard in thy petitions to God, and woo hard in thy persuasions to thy wife, that she may be pure! Doth not thine heart ache to think that the object of thy dearest love and favour should be the object of God's greatest hatred and fury! that the companion of thy youth, who hath lain in thy bosom, whom thou hast so often embraced, should be a companion of frightful devils, and lie in the lake of fire and brimstone for ever and ever! Canst thou see thy wife posting in the way of perdition, hastening to hell, and never warn her of her danger, or ask her why she doth so! Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Ah, where are thy bowels? Lord, since thou hast called me to be the head, help me to guide and direct, to see and speak, both to thy Majesty in humble supplications, and to her in hearty and serious expostulations, that I may be ministerially, what thy Son is meritoriously, the saviour of my body. I have found a costly feast in my Father's family; the house is not so full but still there is room; there is nothing wanting but comers and company, and shall I suffer one so near me to starve for want of knowledge where it is to be had? Oh, let thy goodness to me cause me to persuade, and let thy goodness to her enable me to prevail, that she may taste and see that thou art gracious!

I wish that I may naturally give the honey of sweetness and love, yet when provoked by sin against God, the sting of reproof, that I may bear with my wife in all things save wickedness. If I nourish her natural diseases, I kill her body; if I cherish her spiritual distempers, I damn her soul. And shall I, through cursed fondness, flatter her into the unquenchable fire? Lord, cause me not only to wink at her weaknesses, and to hide them from the world's eye, but also to observe any wickedness she shall be guilty of, and to set it so in order before her eyes that thou mayest cast it behind thy back; yea, Lord, help me to hearken to all her holy counsels, and to hear thee speaking by her, as well as to desire her to hearken to me; but let me never submit to any wicked advice, lest thou judge me at last, as thou didst Adam at first, for hearkening to the voice of my wife.

I wish that I may not, as some husbands, who dwell with their wives as brutes, understanding nothing in marriage but the meaning of carnal desires and the language of lust, yet deal worse with the wives of their bosoms than with their beasts, and deny them what is convenient for their outward well-being; but that both my person and portion may be for her comfort in health, and for her cordial in sickness, and employed upon all occasions, though no

for the pampering of her pride, or nourishment of any sin, yet in a moderate way for her service. When my God gave himself to my soul, he gave me all he had also, and thought nothing too much for me, and shall I, who have not spared myself from her, think everything too good for her? If she brought a portion, what is become of it? Was it laid out to purchase her misery and poverty? If she did not, yet she is my wife, and both nature and Scripture command me to allow her answerable to my wealth and her wants. Oh that I might be as Elkanah to Hannah, better to her than ten sons, than all relations. Lord, whilst I live make me so loving and industrious, that rather myself than my wife may lack. Let her body never want food and raiment, nor her soul the gospel feast, or the robes of thy Son's righteousness; and when I die, whomsoever I neglect, if by thy providence I am able, let me make for her a comfortable provision, that when I am happy in heaven, my other half may not, through my unworthiness, be miserable on earth. If it be thy pleasure that I shall die poor—for my portion, through infinite grace, is not in this life—then let it please thy Majesty to grant me this mercy, that I may leave my fatherless children with thee, and bid my widow trust in thee. Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak further on her behalf. In what want soever I shall leave this world, let me leave my wife the poor, or rather the rich, Levite's portion, that though she hath no part or inheritance here below, Num. xviii. 20, yet thou thyself mayest be the portion of her cup, and the lot of her inheritance. Oh, then the lines will fall to her in pleasant places, and she will have a goodly heritage.

Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes. Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Do thou so adorn me with grace, suitable to this relation, as a bridegroom is decked with ornaments, that when I cease to be a husband, I may know what it is to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, Hosea ii. 19, not as I do in this imperfect condition, where thou hast only betrothed me unto thyself in righteousness and judgment, and in loving-kindness and in mercy, and so whilst I am present in the body I am absent from the Lord; but in the highest degree, in that place where thou wilt marry me to thyself for ever. Kiss me with the sweetest kisses of thy lips, lodge me all night between thy breasts, where is the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the true bridegroom and the voice of the true bride; where is the voice of them that say and sing, Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

How a Christian may exercise herself to godliness in the relation of a wife, with a good wish about the duty of a wife.

I come, in the next place, to the duty of the wife, and to shew wherein the power of religion doth manifest itself in that relation.

It is observable that the Holy Ghost, wherever he mentioneth the duties of husbands and wives, doth, in the first place, always set down the duty of the wife, as Eph. v. 22; Col. iii. 18; 1 Peter iii. 1–3; of which a double reason is given by learned Davenant:[1] first, Because the duty of a wife is most difficult. Affection or love, which is the husband's chief duty, is pleasant; but subjection or obedience, which is the wife's main duty, is painful. Subjection is so much against the hair, that many, like untamed heifers, kick and fling if the yoke come but near their necks; though the harder their task is, the greater is their credit if they perform it conscientiously. Secondly, Because the love of a husband doth very much depend upon the subjection of a wife. Women cannot rationally expect that their husbands should affect them, unless they obey their husbands. An obedient wife is the likeliest woman in the world to command her husband.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, make his word thy rule, and godliness thy business in it: 'Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised,' Prov. xxxi. 30. Inward beauty is indeed praiseworthy: 'She shall be praised.' A gracious wife is a credit to herself, and her sex a crown; a choice ornament to her second self, Prov. xii. 4. Both her holiness and her husband will praise her.

1. Her holiness: 'Her works praise her in the gate,' Prov. xxxi. 31. When others have nothing but the black beauty-spots of sin to set them forth, pride compasseth them about as a chain, and atheism covereth them as a garment; grace is her glory, and godliness is her comeliness. Religion buildeth her such an honourable monument, that neither age nor hell can ever pull it down. How famous are many women in Scripture for their faith! 'Some of

[1] 1. Quia difficilius est subjectionis quam dilectionis officium præstare. Amare enim est jucundum, sed subjicere et parere alteri plerumque molestum. 2. Quia dilectio viri ut plurimum pendet ex debita subjectione fœminæ.—*Daven. in Col.* iii. 18.

them believed, and of the chief women not a few,' Acts xvii. 4. When the apostles proved cowards, many women followed Christ to his shameful cross; and the Holy Spirit records it to their eternal credit: Mat. xxvii. 55, 'And many women were there.' The feminine gender hath sometimes done more worthily than the masculine. The weaker vessels have held out in the hottest fires. In the Marian days some women proved eminent martyrs. Though the philosopher tell us that woman is only *σφάλμα φύσεως*, the aberration of nature, and many vilify them as persons of no worth, yet Scripture, the word of truth, dignifieth them as consisting of the same essential parts, and capable of the same celestial perfections, with men. How highly doth God commend them when they are holy! and for aught any man can tell, a woman, next the human nature of Christ, hath the greatest place of any creature in heaven.

2. Her husband will praise her. A gracious wife satisfieth a good husband, and silenceth a bad one: 'Her children arise and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her,' Prov. xxxi. 28. Budæus and Paræus do both speak their wives to be of extraordinary worth. Mr Whately of Banbury doth publish to the world the relative piety of his wife, how she performed her duty every day as exactly as was possible.

The wife's special duty consisteth principally in these particulars:—

First, In honouring her husband's person. The Persian ladies have the resemblance of a foot worn in the top of their coronets, in token that the top of their glory doth stoop to their husband's feet. The moon, in the sun's absence, takes upon her the government of the heavens; but in his presence she veils herself. The wife, next to her husband, shines in her house, far above all those stars which are fixed there; but God hath appointed that she give place to her husband, and be willing to prefer him. Rebecca, when she approached Isaac, 'took a veil and covered her head,' Gen. xxiv. 56, in token of subjection to her husband; and 'for this cause,' namely, in sign of subjection, 'ought the women to have power,' that is, a veil, 'over their heads,' 1 Cor. xi. 10, saith the apostle. That this veiling the face is a token of great reverence, we find in Elijah, who, when God appeared and talked to him in Mount Horeb, he covered his face. Sulpitius Gallus is said to have divorced his wife because she appeared abroad with her face uncovered. And it was an old custom among the Romans, that the woman on her marriage-day was brought to her husband with a

yellow veil, called *flammeum,* cast over her face.[1] Every woman, as a woman, is inferior to man, much more as a wife; and therefore it is but natural and rational that she reverence her superior. 'Nevertheless,' saith the apostle, 'let the woman see that she reverence her husband,' Eph. v. 33. This subjection to the husband is indeed the relation grace of the wife, and therefore always minded where her duties are mentioned, Eph. v.

This reverence must be inwardly, in her affections; she must love him as a member, and fear him as a head. Her fear indeed must not be like that of a servant to his master, nor that of a child to his father. From the former it differs specifically; for the slave fears the rod, not the person; the wife feareth the person, not the rod. From the latter it differeth gradually; according to the degree of the distance, such is the degree of reverence; the child's distance being much greater, his reverence is, or should be, greater also; but her fear must be like that of the church to Christ, an acknowledgment of his superiority over her, and an unwillingness to displease him in anything, and a dread lest she should offend him. When the judgment consents to the husband's authority, the will resolves to own it in all her actions, and the heart hath a dread upon it, lest she should disown it; then she is said to fear him, and not before. The apostle Peter, writing to wives, wishing them so to live that their unbelieving husbands may be won; 'Whilst they behold,' saith he, 'your chaste conversation, coupled with fear,' 1 Peter iii. 24. A reverent wife may possibly make a religious husband. The head may fare much the better for the good temperature of the body. Fear in her may be instrumental to work faith in him.[2] There was one woman famous, or rather infamous, in the world for the want of this fear; but, reader, observe the sad fruit of it. Michal, David's wife, despised him in her heart, 1 Chron. xv. 29. Here was her fault: instead of fearing him as her head, she despised him, and that for his holiness, in her heart. But mark also the fruit: 'Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child until the day of her death.' God hath barren wombs for such bold, impudent women. If she slight her head, God will

[1] Nuptiæ vocantur et connubium Latine, a nubendo; quod virgines, cum ducerentur ad matrimonium, se nuberent, *i.e.,* obvelarent pudoris ergo; et ut darent testimonium suæ ad virum subjectionis. Γάμον vocant Græci, quidam δάμον, quasi dictum volunt a δομάζειν domare, quod domentur virgines et viris subjiciantur. Alii volunt, παρὰ τὸ δεδμᾶσθαι ἀλλήλοις τοὺς συζύγους, quod conjuges simul vinciantur.—*A. Val. Maxim.,* lib. vi. cap. 3.

[2] Cordis dimissio fons externæ subjectionis est; sine hac aut coacta aut simulata omnis subjectio.—*Davenant in Col.* iii. 18.

scourge her body. Barrenness in those days made women contemptible. Then when Elizabeth, Luke i. 25, had a child, she triumpheth: 'God hath taken away my reproach.' Now because David was contemptible in her eye, God made her contemptible in every eye. And it is further remarkable, that Michal, having no natural children, would needs have some adopted children of her sister Merab's; but God punished her in them also. He disgraced her in hanging and bringing them to disgraceful ends. Barren Michal hath many daughters, who despise their husbands; but let such consider that they shall one way or other feel God's anger. Though they will not fear their dying husbands, yet they shall find that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' 2 Sam. vi. 23, and xxi. 8, 9.

This reverence must be outward, in their expressions and actions; Sarah called Abraham lord, 1 Pet. iii. 6, not out of flattery, but to acknowledge his authority; not as desirous to humour his pride, but as willing to know her own place. Jezebel and Zipporah are both stigmatised in holy writ, for their saucy, sinful language to their husbands, Exod. iv. 25; 1 Kings xxi. 7. If a woman answer her husband, it must be with modesty; if she would advise him, it must be with lenity; and if she admonish him, with much humility. If she speak of him, it must be respectfully; if she speak to him, it must be reverently. The humble posture of her body upon all occasions, should speak the reverent temper of her mind. The fault of some wives is very foul, who, out of disrespect, refuse to call their husbands by their names, but have some passionate periphrasis to decipher them by—this man, or this fellow, or, it may be, this fool; as Saul in derision called David the son of Jesse, and the Jews in contempt called Christ the carpenter's son.

The woman is called the glory of the man, 1 Cor. xi. 7, because it is a high honour to him that so excellent a creature as a woman should be his inferior. Surely, then, wives which refuse this reverence are their husbands' shame and disgrace. When once a woman harbours contemptible thoughts of her husband, this one evil weed will so overrun and spread in her words and actions, that no good thing will grow by it. Oh it is a most doleful living, where the wife, instead of reverencing, is always railing at, and wrangling with, her husband. There are wives that are worse than their dogs; their dogs, though they bark at strangers, will not bark at their master; but they spare not the husband, the master of the house, in their cursed peevishness and passions. Nay, the very devils amongst them have order; they will acknowledge a prince, a

superior among them; but these wives will acknowledge none above them, but must rule all themselves, or else the house must quickly be made too hot for their husbands. A serpent is as good a companion as such a wife; for a serpent, if it kill, doth it suddenly; but such a wife makes her husband die lingeringly, for his whole life is a civil death. I thank my God, I never so much as tasted those sour herbs; but truly I have from my heart pitied some husbands, whose outward beings have by such wives been made as miserable as is almost possible on this side hell. It is a thousand pities that the tongues of such shrews have not as many blisters as their jaws have teeth. It is never better with their husbands than when they are hoarse; and it were well if such blemishes of their sex, such monsters in nature, and such plagues to a family, were gagged till they had learned better language.

Some of the Rabbis give us this reason why she was made of a rib, taken from under the arms of Adam, that she might acknowledge her subjection to him, as well as that he be minded of giving protection to her. And indeed the titles given to the husband in Scripture, speak both his superiority and her subjection. He is called her lord, her master, her guide, her head, 1 Pet. iii. 6; Esther i. 17; Prov. ii. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 3. How many reasons are laid down for this reverence?

1. Because the woman was made after the man, therefore she should not go before the man. That which was first in this sense, must not be last; and that which is last, first. 1 Tim. ii. 13. 'For Adam was first formed, then Eve.'

2. Because the woman was made of man. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 'For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man.' She is a branch springing from him as her root, and did receive her original and being, under God, from him. Now the effect is ever less noble and inferior to the cause.

3. Because the woman was made for man. 1 Cor. xi. 9, 'Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.' In reason, that which serveth to any end, is less than the end to which it serveth.

4. Because the woman was first in sin, Gen. iii. 16; 1 Tim. ii. 14. Sin brings shame; therefore she that was first in sin, must not expect to be first in honour. Since he sinned in being ruled by her, it is fit that she should be ruled by him.

5. Because the man is the head of the woman, Eph. v. 23. The members are subject to the head, without rebelling or reasoning. This duty of reverence is natural as well as necessary.

6. Because the man is the image and glory of God, 1 Cor. xi. 7. In man there is a resemblance of God's dominion and authority, being lord of the world. The woman is the image and glory of God, according to her original creation, for she was made as holy and happy as the man; but not according to her personal relation to her husband; for dominion, which is the man's privilege, is God's glory and prerogative, and not subjection, which is the woman's duty.

7. Because God hath given the man dominion over his wife: 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,' Gen. iii. 15. 'The cities,' saith Israel to the king of Ammon, 'which thy god Chemosh hath given thee to possess, wilt thou not possess them?' Judges xi. 25; so say I. The superiority which our God hath given men to enjoy, shall they not enjoy it?

Reader, if thou hast any fear of God, I know thou wilt fear thy husband, and then thy language to him, and of him, will be, not rude but reverent, and thy carriage will be, not pouting and lowering, frowning and fuming, but such as is clothed with the garment of meekness. 2. In obeying his lawful precepts; thy work is not to complain of, but to comply with, thy husband's commands; obedience will arise naturally from reverence, and is the best testimony of it. Many women are noted for questioning and quarrelling at their husbands' power, but few for obeying their husbands' lawful pleasure. Sarah was chronicled and crowned in Scripture for obeying Abraham; but it is clear she had never a natural daughter. The Rabbis tell us that ten cabs or measures of speech descended into the world, and the woman took away nine of them. Many are indeed,—I speak not of all,—full of words, but barren of works; apter to dispute their husband's authority than to obey it. But holy women will be like Dorcas, full of good works, and know the place in which God hath set them. How infamous is that family where the wife, like Jezebel, rules the roast, and the husband, like Ahab, lets her do what she listeth! If the moon get the upper hand of the sun, the wife of the husband, the next thing to be expected is an eclipse of the honour of that house. That house, saith one, is a hutch-backed house, where the man makes himself an underling to his wife. 'Wives,' saith the apostle, 'submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything,' Eph. v. 22–24. In which words the Spirit of God gives women,

First, A precept to subjection: 'Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands.' The word ὑποτάσσεσθε, submit, signifieth a subordination, or orderly subjection of the wife to the authority of her husband. A commanding wife inverts the order of nature, as well as the ordinance of the Creator. A wife is made to be a help to a man, not to be the head of a man. Ahasuerus' law was written in the tables of those heathen hearts, that every man should bear rule in his house, Esther i. 22.

Secondly, The spring of this subjection, as unto the Lord. Her obedience to her husband must proceed from conscience to God.[1] It will not be a sufficient excuse for her to say, He doth not love me, therefore I will not obey him; for not the husband's affection to her, but her affection to God, must be the great motive to subjection. If my husband fail in his duty, I suffer; but if I fail in my duty, I sin. The former is a cross, but the latter is a curse. If the husband do not mind his duty, but is wicked, the wife hath the more need to do her duty, that she may win him, 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. Besides, it is God that commandeth this obedience, and he will requite it.

Thirdly, The ground or reason for this subjection; for the husband is the head of the wife: his superiority commandeth subjection from her. It is natural for the body to obey the head. What an uncomely sight is it to see the shoulders above the head; the wife to lord it over her husband.

Fourthly, The pattern. 'Therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, let the wife be subject to her husband.'[2] The obedience of the church is cordial; sincerity is her glory—she doth the will of God from the heart. The obedience of the church is constant; it runneth parallel with her life. 'I have inclined my heart to keep thy precepts always, to the end:' thus should wives obey their husbands. Their hearts should accompany their hands, and their obedience should last whilst they live. As a fair, gilded glass is of little worth unless it represent the image of him that looks into it, so a beautiful wealthy wife is worth little, unless she resemble her husband's disposition in her carriage and conditions; I mean, so far as she may with a good conscience.

Fifthly, The extent: 'So ought the wife to be subject to her

[1] Subjectio creaturæ unius ad alteram nihil aliud est ex parte Dei, quam divina dispositio qua imperfectiora perfectioribus subordinata sunt, ut ab his perficiantur, regantur et conserventur.—*Dav. in Col.*

[2] Πειθαρχία ἐστι τῆς εὐπραξίας μήτηρ, obedientia mater felicitatis. Verum et vetus adagium.

husband in everything'—*i.e.*, in everything that is lawful. If the husband enjoin what is inconvenient, she may meekly desire it may be waived, and humbly offer her reasons; but if he persist, she must obey, though it be painful. If it be possible, she must set about it. And truly, though thy husband be never so peevish, endeavour to thine utmost to please him; for though he take all thy actions ill, yet thy God will take them well, and so doing thou shalt be sure to please God, who, the harder thy task is, by reason of thy husband's untowardliness, will take it the kinder at thy hands. Only, if he command what is sinful, she may, nay, she must, refuse to obey him, for then he commandeth beyond his power. It is said, therefore, Col. iii. 19, 'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' Mark, *in the Lord*, not *against the Lord*. As God must be loved above a husband, so God must be pleased before a husband. As thy husband is to be loved next to God, so he must be pleased next to God, but not before God. If a justice of peace command his neighbour to take up arms against the king, he is not to be obeyed. If his neighbour obey him, they are both traitors. But what a justice commands an inferior officer, in the defence of his prince, or in obedience to him, must be obeyed.

Indeed, sad are the consequences of unruly wives; as when the order of nature is disturbed, there ensue great inconveniences, as earthquakes, thunders, and deluges; so when this order of the wife's subjection to her husband is denied, there follow sad inconveniences. Their hearts tremble like an earthquake with jealousy of each other; their house is full of the thunder of brawling and scolding, and their whole lives with an inundation of weeping and bitterness.

The obedience of the wife must be performed willingly.[1] If she do the thing commanded for the matter, and do it not in a cheerful manner, her obedience loseth its lustre, it is little worth. When a man payeth his just debts, but grumblingly, and, as we say, with much ado, because the law would otherwise seize him, it is a sign of a dishonest mind.

Truly, many that make a great profession are exceeding faulty in this particular of subjection. The geographer tells us of the Italian women, that they are angels in the street, saints in the church, and devils in their houses. I wish it might not be said so of many English women. Sure I am, the gospel suffers by the unquiet carriage of some professors.

[1] Sic placeat uxor voluntati conjugis, ut non displiceat voluntati conditoris.—*Greg.*

Some Hebrews[1] observe that woman was made of a bone, to shew her hard and intolerable nature; and others tell us, that in the controversy of free-will, it seems without controversy, that when man lost free-will, the woman found it, and still keeps it; but they are commanded, saith the apostle, to be under obedience, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, as also, saith the law, even that law which God himself preached to the woman, Gen. iii. 15. It is no less than a breach of God's law for a man to make himself lower than God hath set him. A king will never thank the mayor of a town for surrendering his place to his inferior, and suffering his inferior to trample his authority under his feet. God will never thank those fond or foolish husbands that deliver up that dominion which he hath given them, and suffer their wives to triumph over it, and trample on it. In permitting themselves thus to be trampled on, they suffer the image and glory of God to be trampled on. It is not kindness, but baseness, not humility, but iniquity, to be ruled by one whom he should rule. Such a person, like a cowardly captain, leaves his place and station without order to a lower officer, and must expect to be accountable for it to the Lord of hosts. But still the husband must rule, not with rigour, but with such mildness and moderation as is answerable to so near a relation.

The wife also, by taking upon her this power, falleth into a damnable error; besides, the effects of a disobedient wife are sad to the whole family. When the head commandeth the feet to walk, the hands to work, and the other members to do their peculiar parts and office, and they disobey, what will follow but the destruction of the whole body? Oh, what a Bedlam house is that, where the wife, instead of obeying, is often scolding at her husband! When she should be as David's harp, to allay Saul's fury, to abate her husband's anger, she is the evil spirit to kindle and increase it. Some women, like the harlot, are loud and stubborn, Prov. vii. 11. Though their feet are fettered when their husbands bid them go, yet their tongues are not tied, but run fast enough in reviling and reproaching their heads that own them. The disloyal wife is usually loudest, and nettles her husband out of his power; she is loud and stubborn.

Thirdly, In furthering the good of her family and husband.

1. Of the family. Therefore she is fitly termed a housewife; and the apostle chargeth women to be keepers at home, Tit. ii. 5. And to the credit of Sarah, it is recorded, when the angel asked Abraham where she was, he said, 'Behold, in the tent,' Gen. xviii.

[1] Ex. Mercer.

9. Not, as Dinah, gadding in the fields, nor like Tamar, gazing in the streets, but at her dwelling, in her tent.[1] Phidias, when he was to draw a woman, painted her sitting under a snail's shell, signifying that she should imitate the snail, which goeth not abroad without her house on her back. Whilst her husband is careful abroad, she must not be careless at home. The Roman husbands, when they brought their wives first home, delivered the keys of their houses to them, intimating that they must take the care of domestical affairs.

The Egyptians gave no shoes to their wives, but suffered them to go barefoot, that they might stay always within-doors.[2] The man after God's own heart compares a wife to a vine, which groweth by the house side, which doth both nourish and delight the inhabitants therein with its curious clusters of grapes, Ps. cxxviii.; and the son tells us of a harlot, that 'her feet abide not in her house,' Prov. vii. 11. Nay, the apostle joineth 'chaste women' and 'keepers at home' together, Tit. ii. 5. She that keepeth her house most, keepeth her chastity best; she that goeth often without cause or calling out of her own doors, may be easily drawn to step into another's house and bed.

Women ought to take care of their husbands' affairs within-doors, to see that her servants be employed, her children and servants supplied with necessaries, and that nothing be either wanted or wasted. Some women are like a gouty leg, they love to lie soft, to be wrapped warm, to have much tendance, but in the meantime they sit still and do nothing. Some tell us the merchant must ask his factor whether he shall thrive or no. Most men may ask their wives whether they shall thrive or no. If she be lavish, though he be laborious, a great estate may quickly come to little.

The last chapter of Proverbs is an excellent looking-glass for women to dress themselves by every morning, where Solomon, or rather Bathsheba, inspired by the Holy Ghost, sets her forth in all her ornaments, in which we may observe, first her value, and then her virtues.

First, Her value, ver. 10. She is more worth than her weight in gold: 'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.' She is, like a precious jewel, rare and seldom seen,

[1] Uxor quasi unxor; domum enim viri deducta, oleo postes inungebat.

[2] Hanc ob causam jubet apostolus uxores esse *φιλάνδρους καὶ οἰκούρους*; et refert Plutarchus Egyptias mulieres calceis omnino usas non fuisse, ut domi suæ discerent residere, et domestica munia obire.

hard to come by, but being once got off, to be esteemed at a high rate. A good wife is inestimable wealth; he that hath thousands in his trunks hath no treasure comparable to her.

Secondly, Her virtues.

1. Her prudence. She knoweth when and what to speak: 'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and the law of grace is under her lips,' ver. 26. Her words have their weight, for her tongue is like choice silver.

2. Her charity. She is no churl, but as she getteth much, so she giveth somewhat out of her earnings to others: ver. 20, 'She stretcheth her hands to the poor; yea, she stretcheth her hands to the needy.' As Placilla, the wife of Theodosius, she may be called the poor man's friend.

3. Her piety. She is not of their number who are well habited but ill hearted, but 'strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come,' ver. 25. Her great care is for gracious clothing, such as will render her glorious in the eyes of God, and angels, and all the saints.

4. Her fidelity. This is generally propounded, ver. 11, 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.' He may commit his estate and household affairs into her hands with confidence; he may trust her to provide food, and work for her children and servants, and to prevent waste in both. Whether he be present or absent, it is all one; for she is both prudent and provident to take care that they neither lack nor lavish, so that he shall have no need of spoil. He shall not be compelled to supply his wants by force or fraud, or any way of wickedness. The word *spoil* is an allusion to soldiers, who, having subdued their enemy's country, and seized the treasures and choicest things of their cities, send them home as spoils to their own families. Now he shall have no necessity of getting riches by robbery, or such indirect courses, for she will take care, and through God's blessing on her industry provide for him and his plentifully; or as some expound the phrase, his family shall be as full of goods as a camp after the sacking of a city. Her faithfulness is amplified by her care of her household.

Two things she is especially mindful of.

First, That all in it mind their work.

Secondly, That none in it have any want. Laziness and lacking she seeks to prevent; diligence and diet she counteth her duty to take care of. It is not in her house, as in many amongst us, where the inhabitants live the life of dogs, in idleness and hunger; for she will see,

1. That all in it work. The rust of idleness shall not eat them up for want of employment; for, 1. She will provide them materials to work with; the mill shall not stand still for lack of corn. Ver. 13, 'She seeketh wool and flax;' such work as is most proper for her maids, and most profitable for her house. If she see it not at home she will seek it abroad, and take pains to fetch in a stock to employ herself and servants.

When she hath provided work, 2. She herself will set them a pattern; she 'worketh willingly with her hands.' She goeth before them in diligence as well as in dignity. She is no such dainty dame as to loiter herself whilst others labour, but 'she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands handle the distaff,' ver. 19. She counts it no blot or blemish to be seen at her sewing or spinning. Bathsheba thought it would become even the wife of Solomon; and some tell us that the wife of Augustus Cæsar did not play at cards, but work in carding and spinning. Nay, she is early and late at work; she riseth whilst it is night, before day, especially in winter, ver. 15; and 'her candle goeth not out by night,' ver. 18. She sits up as long as is convenient; and whilst she is at it, she doth not play at work. 'She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms,' ver. 17. It was anciently the manner of the Jews to wear long and loose garments, which were no small impediments to them in their walking or working; therefore when they would do anything with diligence, they did gird their clothes about their bodies close. To describe her nimbleness and activeness, how she is not slow and slothful at it, she is set forth to gird her loins with strength, so 1 Kings xviii. 46. And because the strength of one lieth much in their arms, (God's arm is put often for his strength, Deut. v. 15,) therefore, to shew that she worketh her work, as the Hebrew phrase is, it is said she strengtheneth her arm; nay, as she provideth work and giveth them a pattern, so she, 3. Seeth that all in their places be employed. Early in the morning she giveth a task to her maidens, ver. 15. They shall not be tattlers, and tale-bearers, and busybodies in other matters for want of work, for she will tell them what their task is.

Further, as she appoints them their part, so she will take care that they perform it: 'She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness,' ver. 27. Though her hands are working, yet her eyes are watching to observe what is done or left undone in the family. The word used of the good wife's looking, is a metaphor from a watchman in a watch-tower,

who, seating himself in that place of advantage for that purpose, looketh carefully on every side, observing who cometh, who goeth, and giving notice to the city of all approaching enemies, that none may surprise them suddenly; so must the wife have her eye upon the behaviour of all in her house.

2. That none in it want, two things are ordinarily needful; she will take care that both be provided. Food, vers. 14, 15, 'She is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar;' —*i.e.*, she is as careful to provide meat as work for them. And as she will see that they do their duties, so she will foresee that they shall not want diet; therefore she is compared to a merchant's ship, because she sendeth out one commodity, and fetcheth in another; she exchangeth flax for food, and she and her servants eat of their own earnings; and also because what she hath not about her she will fetch from abroad. 'She riseth whilst it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household,' ver. 15. When she hath laid in provision, she doth not lay it up to moulder, but in the morning alloweth meat, as well as appointeth work, to her maidens. She doth neither pine nor pamper her children and servants, but afford them what is sufficient and convenient for them.

So for raiment; she gives them not only warm diet for their bellies, but also warm clothes for their backs. 'She is not afraid of the snow, for all her house are clothed with scarlet,' or double garments, ver. 21. If a hard winter come she is not much troubled, for herself and her family are clad for all weathers beforehand.

Secondly, Her faithfulness is amplified by her carriage towards her husband, ver. 12. She hath a care of all the rest in her house, that they want nothing fit for them, but she hath a special regard of her husband. The body will not wrong or hurt by its goodwill either legs or feet, but it is exceeding tender of the head; 'she will do him good, and not evil, all the days of his life.' The Holy Spirit observeth—1. Her tenderness; and, 2. The term of it; her Christian carriage towards him, and her godly constancy in it. Her carriage: she will do him good, by performing the several duties of her place, by honouring his person, submitting to his lawful pleasure, by furthering his outward wealth and his bodily welfare. And not evil: she will neither impoverish his purse nor blemish his credit, nor any way willingly grieve his spirit. 2. Her continuance in it. Her goodness to him is not like a sunshiny morning, which is soon overcast with a cloud, and so continueth lowering till night; but she doeth him good, and not evil, all the

days of his life. In youth, in age, in prosperity, in adversity, she is constant in her love to him, and officious carriage towards him; in all changes and chances she cleaves to him, and clings about him as ivy to a wall, and will sooner cease to live than leave him.

In the Bohemian persecution, the mayor of Litomeritia condemned twenty-four godly citizens to death, amongst which number one was his son-in-law, for whose life his own daughter fell at his feet and begged hard; but he, harder than a rock, bade her be content, telling her she should have a better husband when he was dead. She replied, You shall never more espouse me to any; and so, beating her breast and tearing her hair, she followed her husband to the river, and when he was cast into the midst of the river, bound, she leaped in and caught him about the middle, but being unable to draw him forth, were both drowned together, and the next day were found embracing one another.

Reader, if thou art a wife, read often the prudence, charity, piety, and fidelity of this virtuous woman: look often into this glass which Bathsheba hath given thee, and labour to resemble this pattern set before thee; be a meet help both to thy household and to thy husband.

It is the observation of Ferus on Gen. ii. 18, where it is said, 'I will make an help meet for him,' *Potuit simplicitur dicere, Faciam ei fœminam*, &c. God might have said barely, I will make him a woman, and no more; but God chooseth rather a periphrasis to describe the woman's duty, 'I will make an help meet for him.' Further it is observable,

It is not said, I will make a help for him—for so beasts are helps to men, therefore called *Jumenta a juvando*—but 'I will make a fit or meet help;' in the original it is as before him,[1] that is, answering to him, Gen. ii. 18. The wife to the husband, must be as the lock to the key, answerable and suitable, or else of no use. Rebecca provided such meat as Isaac loved: a wife should observe her husband's disposition, and carry herself accordingly. If he be sad and troubled, she must endeavour to satisfy and comfort him. When Manoah was grieved, saying, 'We shall die, because we have seen God;' his wife cheered him, saying, 'God would never have told us such good news if he had intended any evil to us,' Judges xvii. 22, 23.

In sickness she ought to be specially careful of him, and kind to him. She that is a help at all times will be most helpful at such a time when he cannot help himself. Job's wife was as notorious

[1] Hebrew, *Cenegdo*, as one before him.

for her unkindness, as infamous for her counsel to her husband: 'My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated her, (by a motive that would have melted one as hard as a marble,) for the children's sake of my own body,' Job xix. 17. The lady Eleanor, wife to Prince Edward, when her husband was stabbed with a poisoned knife by a treacherous assassin, and other means proved ineffectual, sucked out the poison when he slept, and without hurt to herself saved his life.[1] The Christian wife of Valdaura, advised to forbear her husband's company, because of his noisome and infectious diseases, did not only refuse to leave him, but delighted in him, notwithstanding his loathsome body, and was to him friend, physician, father, mother, wife, nurse, anything, everything, to do him good.[2] Nay, the dogs had so much pity as to lick the sores of Lazarus; but many wives now-a-days are so far from sucking their husbands' wounds, or licking their sores, that they, like Job's wife, cannot endure their breath. Nay, when they should be pouring oil into their wounds, like her, Job ii. 9, they are piercing them deeper with their poisonous words. Other women, by their proud, ambitious spirits, instead of lengthening their husbands' lives, bring them to unnatural deaths. The wives of the two Seymours,[3] one protector, and the other high-admiral of England, caused such a deadly difference between them, that it ended in the ruin of them both, which made the English historian passionately to cry out, Oh wives, the most sweet poison, the most desired evil in the world! . . . . Woman was given to man for a comfort, not for a counsellor, much less a controller. The orator[4] said of Sicily, A man may seek Sicily in Sicily, it was so much impoverished by the government of Verres. It is as true of wives; a man may seek a wife in a wife, many of them are so much degenerated from their duties; their husbands have the care, but not the comfort of a wife. Nazianzen saith of his mother, that she was a doctress to his father, and a great help to him in matters of piety; but many wives, if they handle their husbands' sores, whether bodily or spiritual, do, as some unfaithful chirurgeon to get more money, make them sorer, or put them to more pain. As Job's friends to him, they pretend to comfort their husbands, and to allay their heaviness; but, alas! they afflict them miserably, and increase their mourning. Surely their husbands may say to them what Job did to his friends, 'Miserable comforters

[1] Camden in Middlesex, Speed Chronicle, p. 630.

[2] Ludov. Vives, lib. ii. De Christian. Fœmina.

[3] Speed Chron. in Life Edw. the Sixth, p. 1117. Spencer, 433. Sir John Heywood in the Life of Edw. the Sixth, p. 84.

[4] Cicer. in Ver.

are ye all;' physicians of no value! Wicked Jezebel would comfort her husband in sickness; scoffing Michal would hazard herself to save her husband's life; yet some that pretend to more affection and holiness, are less helpful to their husbands' persons.

4. In loving him above all others. Every wife must esteem highly of her husband, and then her affections will follow her judgment; let him be to thee the most precious of all persons. Some indeed tell us, if their husbands had as good qualities, and as great abilities, as such and such men, then they could love them; but I must tell such women that not the good natures or features of men, but the good pleasure of God, is to be the ground of their love. Besides, these women can love their own crooked, lame, dull, undutiful children, before the straight, quick-witted, and obedient children of others, and why not their husbands![1] Oh, it is excellent when the wife loves her husband as herself, and looks always upon his person and actions through the spectacles of love! It is observable, that though nature will teach a woman to love her husband, yet God doth also enjoin it, Tit. ii. 4, 'that they love their husbands;' partly because some women have put off nature, and are become wild, without natural affection. Partly because God would have the wife's love to her husband to proceed not so much from an instinct of nature as from obedience to Scripture. How exceedingly doth the church, which is the woman's example, love Christ! her expressions, her actions, do abundantly speak her affection; she calls him her love: 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye awake not my love till he please.' Her beloved: 'Behold thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant.' Sometimes her voice to him is, 'O thou whom my soul loveth, tell me where thou feedest,' &c. Sometimes her voice to others, 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, tell ye him that I am sick of love.' Her desires are like a lover: 'Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.' And so are her delights: 'I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste.' Friend, go thou and do likewise. Let thy love to him be a superlative love; forget thy own people, and thy Father's house, out of affection to thy husband. Say of him, 'He is altogether lovely,' Cant. v. 16; Ps. xlv. 10. Whatsoever pair of lips would be Satan's pair of bellows to blow up coals betwixt thee and thy husband, by stretching any of his words upon the tenters, or making a false comment upon the text of any

[1] Tene amorem, nam, ex eo pendent omnia officia quæ didicisti, et quæ non didicisti.—*Augustine.*

of his works, let them be odious to thee; oh loathe such a stinking breath!

If the wife do but love her husband, her yoke will not be so grievous to her. As love to God doth exceedingly sweeten his service, and makes it not only more acceptable to him, but also more delightful to us,—hence that of the apostle: 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous,' 1 John v. 3—so love to a husband will abundantly sweeten her subjection to him, though the load seem to be heavy, when a wife meets with a cross piece especially, yet love will draw it lightly away. A country gentleman, in the late troubles, complained much of quartering a soldier for two or three nights; the same person quartered twenty revelling gallants a whole month, and thought it no burden; love to those latter made all trouble and cost little. Some wives murmur much at their yoke of subjection, but truly they have more cause to complain of their want of affection, for love would make their yoke easy; women that love their gardens will be early in them—work hard all day to make things handsome. Women that love their children count it a play, a pleasure, to tend them, which others would judge no small punishment; so women that love their husbands would count their moderate commands, and whatsoever they did for them, both easy and delightful.

Some tell us of the palm that, separated from her male, she withers and languisheth, insomuch that one would take it for a dry tree; but as soon as she can embrace with her boughs him whom she seems to love, her branches take a vigour which visibly makes them grow young again. The comfort of a woman's life is much bound up in her love to her husband.

One special help whereby a woman may get her heart united to her husband in love is, when she is first married to avoid carefully all occasions of difference. It is very great wisdom at first, especially for a woman to use all means to endear her husband to herself, and herself to her husband. When two boards are first glued together a small matter will loosen them, but if then looked carefully to, when they are once well fastened, the glue being hardened, it will be hard to part them.

5. In endeavouring his spiritual welfare. A woman hath a treble advantage upon her husband, to draw him either to good or evil.

(1.) In regard of opportunities; she is much with him, night and day, at bed and board.

(2.) In regard of liberty; she hath freedom of speaking to him, and improving these opportunities. Servants and children may be with him sometimes, but their distance denieth them that privilege which her nearness and relation giveth her.

(3.) In regard of prevalency. The desires and petitions of a wife are very taking, because of a husband's affection to her. As we see in Esther, who obtained such favour in the sight of her husband Ahasuerus, though a heathen, that he promiseth to grant her desire, though it were to the half of his provinces. Despina, the wife of Bajazet, the fourth king of the Turks,[1] could persuade her husband to drink wine, though it were prohibited by Mohammed their great prophet. One of the vilest Arian emperors caught the infection from her that lay in his bosom. The devil knew this, and therefore at first made use of Eve to undo Adam and all his posterity, and afterwards made a ladder of Job's wife, whereby he hoped to scale the tower of Job's soul, though without success.

Friend, be careful that Satan do not with thy hand give many a wound to thy head, thy husband. I must tell thee he will endeavour not a little to persuade thee to present that apple of temptation to thy husband, which hath death at its core, hoping that it, coming out of thy fair hands, will be the more desirable and acceptable to him. The voice of this uncircumcised Philistine is like theirs to Delilah concerning Samson, 'Entice him, that I may prevail against him, to bind him and afflict him,' Judges xvi. 5. Oh how sad will it be to thy soul another day, if thy husband, by lying so near thee, should catch that sickness of thee at this day which kills him eternally! Surely thou art an ungrateful wife, if thou improvest the cords of his love to draw him to sin, and thereby to haul him to hell.

Reader, if thou art a wife, improve this privilege for the furtherance of thy husband in piety. It may be he refuseth to pray with thee, or to instruct thee; truly thou hast the more need to pray for him, and to instruct him. When the wife of Manoah had heard good news from heaven, she presently acquainted her husband with it, Judges xiii. 6. Possibly thou hast heard and embraced the glad tidings of salvation, and hast a carnal husband lying in thy bed and bosom, who neither knoweth nor heedeth them; oh, make it thy first task to tell him of them! Think, as the lepers, This day is a day of good tidings, and I hold my peace; if I be silent any longer evil will befall me: I will therefore now go and tell my husband. Whilst I am feasting and supping with Christ,

[1] Turk. Hist., fol. 207.

shall I suffer one whom I love so dearly, through my carelessness, to famish? Alas! he is entangled in the world, as Israel in the wilderness,—the world hath shut him in; he mindeth nothing but his shop, or his sports, his stock, and his pleasure; he little considereth what will become of his precious soul for ever. I will arise and go to him, (first begging God's blessing,) and meekly and mildly tell him of Christ's grievous passion for sin, of his glorious purchase for penitent sinners, and what pity it is that such dunghill vanities should be so eagerly pursued, whilst such matchless mercies are ungratefully slighted. I will entreat him humbly, persuade him affectionately, beseech him earnestly; I will woo as for my life; and oh that I might win him to the Lord of life! Friend, do not defer this; thou canst not foretell the event of it. 'For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?' 1 Cor. vii. 16. The marriage of some hath been their making for ever. Oh, what a rich portion dost thou bring to thy husband, if thou helpest him to the Lord of heaven and earth for his inheritance! A prudent woman preserved the city of Abel from destruction, 2 Sam. xx. 6; and truly a pious wife may prevent her husband's eternal perdition. The head may derive life from the heart; the husband life eternal from his heart, his wife. As the woman of Tekoah was instrumental to bring back Absalom from his banishment, so mayest thou by thy earnest prayers to God, and serious submissive persuasions to thy husband, be instrumental to bring him from his spiritual captivity, and to bring him into favour at the celestial court. Surely such a kindness would give thy husband just cause in all companies, as Alphonsus king of Arragon did, to commend thee.

Some women, as the Quakers, think, if their husbands do not fear God, they may forsake them; but the apostle is clear, that though thy husband were an idolater, and was willing to live with his wife, she must not leave him. When St John had baptized Chrysippa,[1] the governor's wife of Patmos, she would presently thereupon forsake her husband, whereupon the apostle told her that he had a commission to join her to Christ, but no warrant to part her from her husband. The more wicked a husband is, the more he needeth a pious, prudent wife.

It may be thy husband hath his face towards Zion; but by reason of his weak eyes, his ignorance, doth not walk thitherward steadily, but stumblingly. Now, if God hath indued thee with more knowledge, thy work must be, as Priscilla did Apollos, to instruct him more fully in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts

[1] Prochorus in Vit. St John, cap. 21.

xii. 24. For though women may not teach authoritatively, as persons that do it by office and power—1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 'Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection. For I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man,' (the Pepuzian heresy of women's teaching, and the popish heresy of midwives baptising in case of necessity, will not prove it lawful,)[1]—yet women may teach privately in their places; they may instruct their ignorant husbands; they must teach their children and servants; therefore the same apostle commandeth women to be 'teachers of good things,' Titus ii. 3. They must 'keep silence in the churches,' 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and they must speak religiously in their families, and amongst their neighbours. Women should be seen and not heard publicly, but seen by their pious works, and heard by their gracious words privately. Their lips should talk of God's law, and their lives should be shining lamps. Paul speaks of women which laboured with him in the gospel, Phil. iv. 3. If thou canst, now the foundation is laid, labour with thy husband in the gospel, and help to build him up, it will add much both to thy comfort here and account hereafter.

A good wish about the duties of a wife, wherein the former particulars are epitomised.

The eternal and living God, who in the making of the world was pleased, out of his curious and manifold wisdom, to delight in order, (appointing all his creatures their several places, some to be inferior, others superior, and therein to continue and obey his pleasure,) having created me of the weakest sex, a woman, and called me to the relation of a wife, in both which respects I am bound to subjection by his word, I wish that I may never, by endeavouring to start from that station in which he hath set me, question his prudence, or quarrel at his providence, and pervert his end and honour in the creation; but may adorn his gospel by adorning myself, not with broidered hair, or jewels, or gold, or costly apparel, but as becometh a woman professing godliness, with shame-facedness and sobriety, in the hidden man of the heart, with that which is incorruptible, even the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price, 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 4, 5. Lord, let my heart, like the heart of Lydia, be so opened to thy word, my hands, like the hands of Dorcas, be so

[1] Fœminæ sumant de simplicitate candorem, de pudicitia ruborem, inserant in aures margaritas verbi.—*Tertul. de Cult. Fœm.*

full of good works, and my whole behaviour in this relation be so conformable to Scripture, that at last I may be presented a chaste virgin to my Lord Jesus Christ.

I wish that the crosses incident to this condition may make me the more careful to please him in my carriage, who is the God of all consolation. Godliness only is the salt that can heal these bitter waters, which all in this estate must drink. I can never walk cheerfully in this thorny, stony way, unless my feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. How many are the miseries which I must undergo! I conceive sorrow, when I conceive a son, carry my woe up and down in my womb. How am I terrified to think of my approaching travail! The very thoughts of those sharp throes, threaten beforehand to overthrow me. If I continue to my appointed hour, in what danger am I of unloading my babe and my life together! When I have passed these pikes, and through many pangs and much pain have brought my child forth, what frights and fears shall I suffer in bringing him up! Possibly children prove undutiful, servants unfaithful; nay, and my very husband, which should be my greatest comfort, becomes my greatest cross. What personal, domestical, civil, natural maladies must I meet with! And how can I encounter them unless godliness be my strength and cordial? In these and the like cases, whither shall I go, if not to my God? And will he know me if I be a stranger, a worker of iniquity? I had need to know, and to be known, to that house well, in which alone I can expect harbour in stormy weather. Lord, enable me to walk so purely, that though in the world I meet with trouble, yet in thee I may have peace, and even rejoice in tribulation, whilst I may ease my heart by emptying it into thine ears, and support it in all hardships with the lively hope of heaven; for I know assuredly that I can never sink so low in these waters, as to be past the help of thy gracious and almighty hand.

I wish that I may not, like a whorish woman, forsake the guide of my youth, and forget the covenant of my God, Ps. lxxviii. 57; should my heart, like a deceitful bow, turn aside as the Israelites, and cause the arrows of my sacred promises to fly at random and miss the mark I seem to engage at, how certainly would they fall down on my head to my ruin! Oh, it is ill jesting with such edged tools. I have read that the Jews, when they took a solemn covenant, Jer. xxxiv. 18, did cut a beast in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, signifying by that ceremony that they wished, and were worthy to be so served and severed if they brake their covenant. They entered into an oath, Neh. x. 29, and a

curse at the same time; and can I think to loose the bands of my oath, and not find and feel the blow of the curse! Hath not my God told me that if I break my covenant, he will not spare me, Deut. xxix. 20, 21, but have his full stroke at me with his almighty arm; and the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, infinitely worse than the hottest fire, shall smoke against me, and all the curses, heavier than mountains of lead, written in his book, shall lie upon me, and the Lord shall blot out my name from under heaven, cause my very remembrance to rot as an unsavoury carcase. And the Lord will separate me unto evil, (as a beast is separated for the slaughter, and a malefactor set apart for a gibbet,) according to all the curses of the covenant (not a blessing shall fall on me, not a judgment shall fall beside me) that are written in the book of the law. O my soul! what fearful fire and fury, what dreadful death and damnation, is here threatened by the God of truth against thee, if thou break his oath! Lord, unite my heart to fear thy name, and let the dread of thy majesty be as a bridle to prevent my wanderings from thy covenant, and to preserve me in the way of thy commandments.

I wish that this fear of my God may be evidenced to myself and others by my fear of my husband; and that as the moon, though in the sun's absence she ruleth in the heavens, outshines all those glistering stars, yet puts on her veil when once the sun appeareth, and is contented to let her glory stoop to his, that whatsoever power I have in my family over children and servants, yet I may ever acknowledge and veil to my husband's authority and place. What destruction and confusion would it breed in the body politic, if all subordinate officers should strive to be supreme? What an unseemly and uncomely sight would it be in the body natural, if the shoulders should stand as high as the head? My God hath order in his upper heavens, and shall he, when he pleaseth to come and give me a visit, find none in his lower house? Oh let me so count this relation-grace of subjection my chiefest relation-glory, that whilst others are pleasing and priding themselves that they can master their masters, trample their heads under their feet, and are climbed so high above their places, that they endanger the breaking their necks, the loss of their souls, I may reverence my husband, be clothed with humility, and be contented with that condition to which my God hath called me. Lord, enable me so to behold thy power in my husband's person, that I may submit to it in such a gracious manner, that he may be either confirmed in thy truth, or converted to thy faith, whilst he beholdeth my chaste conversation, coupled with fear, 1 Pet. iii. 2.

I wish that I may not only awe him as my head, but also love him as my heart, that my fear of his authority may not in the least abate my affection to his person; but that my heart, though closed to others, may be enlarged to embrace him, and I may never give him cause to complain of me to me, as Delilah to Samson, 'How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thy heart is not with me?' If I love not mine enemy, I cannot be saved; what then will be my portion if I love not mine husband? When publicans and sinners love their friends, though nothing related, shall not I, by profession a Christian, love my greatest earthly friend and nearest relations? Oh let me never be remiss in my love, much less, like a distracted person, hate my own flesh!

My God commandeth me to love him by his precept. Shall not his word be a sufficient warrant? Dare I disobey that order, which hath the King of kings' hand and seal to it? If I resist his law, I proclaim myself a rebel. My God calleth me to it by his providence. I am one with him by divine ordination, and shall I not be one with him in affection? I have chosen my love, and shall I not love my choice? I am joined with him in all estates, whether of prosperity or adversity, and shall I, that am partner with him in every condition, be parted from him in affection? If I deny my love, I quarrel with the Lord. My God commendeth it to me by a lively pattern. How dearly doth the church love Jesus Christ! He is her well-beloved, the fairest of ten thousands, yea, altogether lovely in her eye. She hateth all relations, and trampleth on all possessions, in comparison of him. What a glorious dunghill, and gilded, glistering nothing is this whole world to her in competition with him! And shall I be sick of my husband, when she was so sick of love to hers? Lord, let me never be so unlike the church, my mother; let me not so far degenerate from a Christian, yea, from a heathen, as to deny my hottest love to my husband, but give me to forget my own people, my father's house, and my own self, out of love to my second self.

I wish that I may manifest my love by my cheerful obedience, that as the church is subject to Christ, so I may be subject to my own husband in all things. I disobey the Lord, if I obey not my husband in all things that are lawful. The law of nature teacheth me this lesson; the body is ruled by the head. The law of nations also; those that receive protection from others, yield subjection to them. Oh that no pretence whatsoever which Satan or my stubborn heart may suggest, may ever be my cloak for disobedience. How clearly will my nakedness appear under all the fig-leaves

which I can sew together to cover it! If he hath not wisdom enough to govern well, why did I voluntarily take him for my guide? If he hath, why do I refuse his government? However it be, now I am bound, with a knot tied by my own hands, I must obey in the Lord; whilst I murmur, I do but quarrel at my Maker. If he fail in his love and duty to me, it is my suffering; if I fail in my obedience and duty to him, it is my sin. The former is a bitter potion, but the latter mingled with it, turneth it into rank poison.

Oh, let me never, as some wives, who, by rendering evil for evil, and reviling for reviling, turn their houses into a bedlam, or a *bochim*, a place of weeping. I could wish that he would enjoin me nothing but what is becoming so near a relation, that according to God's precept he would always be more ready to shew the goodness of his nature than the greatness of his power, and encourage my obedience to him by his tenderness of me; but whatsoever his person or his conversation be to me-ward, Lord, next to the pleasing thyself, let me make it my business to please him, and employ that time which others do in grumbling at thee for their painful servitude, in groaning for the cause thereof, my great-grandmother's sin.

I wish that I may approve myself, what my God did appoint me for, a meet help to him in everything, and a hindrance to him in nothing; that I may, in reference to my family, not be as the wife of Lamech, Zillah, the shadow of a wife, as if he married me only for his pleasure, and with no regard to his profit; but that I may write every day, in my diligence and watchfulness about my domestical concernments, after that excellent copy which a queen thought becoming one that did wear a crown, Prov. xxxi. I desire to this end that I may observe the command of my God, to be a keeper at home, that whilst others, like Dinah, are gadders abroad, till they defile themselves, and are frequenters of pl[illegible] or taverns, I may, like Sarah, keep close to my tent, and therein look so well to the ways of my household, that nothing be wanted through my penuriousness, or wasted through my prodigality. Lord, since thy care is to preserve me, let my care be to please thee; and suffer me not to be distrustful of thy providence, or neglectful of those persons whom thou hast committed to my charge.

I wish that of all in my house, I may ever have an affectionate and tender respect for my head; that whilst others are Zipporahs, mourning, and Marah, bitter to their husbands, I may be Naomi, pleasant and delightful to him. My God intended me for a cordial, and if I ever, by my fierce language or frowning carriage, prove a corrosive, how directly do I thwart the end of my Maker and

making! If it be my duty as a Christian, in relation to all the members of Christ, to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, Eph. iv. 31, 32, and to be kind and tender-hearted, surely it is much more my duty as a wife, in relation to my head.

Lord, help me, like Lydia, to be courteous to thy disciples, and, as Phœbe, to be a servant to all thy servants; but in a special manner to be serviceable to him in sickness and health, in all conditions and occasions, whom thou hast appointed to be my master.

I wish that I may be a Mary for piety, as well as a Martha for industry; that I may not be so carking and caring about many things as to neglect the one thing necessary; but in all my dealings about this world, I may demean myself, not as a servant to it, but as a mistress and commander of it, and as one that hath her hope and happiness in a better world. Let me never be as Michal, to mock at my husband for holiness, nor as Jezebel or Job's wife, to stir up my husband to wickedness; but seek with the cords of love to draw him to the Lord of glory. Oh that holiness might ever have such precedency in my heart and life, that my carriage towards my children and servants may savour of Christianity, and my love especially towards my husband may be abundantly operative night and day in persuading and encouraging him to mind heaven! Oh God, with what heaviness do I think at this day of my carnal, unbelieving husband! and oh, with what horror do I forethink of that day when I am like to be half in heaven and half in hell! Oh, be thou pleased, who hast promised to pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, even upon thine handmaids and servants, that thy sons and thy daughters shall prophesy, to pardon all my failings in this relation; pour the oil of grace into thy weaker vessel, that I may, like Elizabeth, be full of the Holy Ghost; like Mary Magdalene, love thee fervently; like Eunice, instruct my children in thy fear; and as Priscilla, be able to commend to my husband the sweetness of thy favour, that whilst men prophesy, converting and confirming others by public ordination, I may preach effectually to the consciences of others, and of my husband especially, by my pious conversation. Lord, as a woman was, through Satan's subtlety, first in the trangression, so was a woman, through thy rich mercy, first in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Suffer me, I beseech thee, in no case, like the first woman, to be a messenger of damnation to my husband, but make me, like that famous penitent, a messenger of salvation.

Lord, I have heard that the true Moses is pleased to marry with a blackamore; the blessed Messias, with sinful mortals. I confess

I cannot but stand amazed at the low stoop of thy sacred Majesty, in matching with so mean, and so base, and stained a family. Hadst thou married with those spotless virgins, angels, the ancientest and honourablest house of thy creatures, thou hadst matched much more like, yet infinitely below thyself. But what admiration and astonishment can answer thy boundless condescension, that thou shouldst take polluted dust and ashes into thy bed and bosom? that thou shouldst strike a conjugal covenant with one whose person is ugliness and deformity, whose parentage is base and beggarly, and whose portion is nothing but diseases and misery? But since it is so, holy Father, because it seems good in thy sight, suffer thine handmaid, though it be not proper to her sex, rather to woo thy dear Son, than to miss so rich, and noble, and gainful a match. Yet, alas! why do I talk thus? He hath prevented me with his kindness many years ago. How importunately hath he courted me! What large costly tokens hath he often presented me with, to persuade my unbelieving heart that his offer of marriage is in earnest! Oh, help me rather to accept him heartily for my Lord and husband, and, bidding adieu to all other lovers, to cleave to him only; that all my wants and weaknesses, sins and sorrows, may be his, and all his robes, and riches, and mercies, and merits, and life, and death may be mine. Oh, do thou so adorn me with grace, as a bride is tired with her jewels, that I may be fitly arrayed for so beautiful a bridegroom. Let me love, honour, please, and obey him above all, before all, and more than all; and my husband here below, next to him, for his sake. Cause me, as a pure virgin, to keep my garments clean, whilst I walk in a dirty defiling world, and as a wise virgin, to insure oil in my vessel against the coming of my Lord, that when death shall give me a bill of divorce from my dearest husband below, I may approach nearer, and enjoy fuller, my dearer husband above, when I shall be above all frights and fears; lest those, my Saviour and my soul, whom my God hath joined together, a deceitful heart, or ensnaring world, or tempting devil, should part asunder; where my rags of misery shall be changed into robes of glory, my nakedness covered with perfect righteousness, that my beloved may bespeak me, in the fullest sense, 'Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; behold, thou art fair my love: behold, thou art all fair; there is no spot in thee.' And whereas a bridegroom rejoiceth over a bride, so shall my God rejoice over me, and I in him, for ever and ever. Amen.

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